THE COMMUNIST

Vol. XIII DECEMBER, 1934 No. 12

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Results and Lessons of the Elections

(*Based on a summary of discussions by the Political Bureau.*)

1. The results of the elections show that the growing radicalization of the masses, which is assuming the character of a growing revolutionary upsurge, still continues to express itself chiefly in strike struggles of the nature of class war (maritime strike, San Francisco General Strike, National Textile Strike); in the resurgence of unemployed struggles; in the struggles of the Negro toilers for equal rights; in the growing desire for united action against the menace of war and fascism.

In the election results this radicalization process has found little conscious expression. The general increase in the C.P. vote (with the exception of Minnesota and Connecticut, where it declined) is highly significant as an indication of the great possibilities of making this radicalization find a fuller expression also on the election field. But thus far the overwhelming masses are still giving their support to the two old capitalist parties, especially the Democratic Party of Roosevelt, while at the same time there is growing evidence (vote for third-party candidates), that the traditional two-party system is being shaken. To this estimate must be added the fact that, aside from the increase of abstention of eligible voters in this election, millions of toilers were disfranchised because of non-citizenship, denial of vote to Negro masses in the South, youth, etc., as in all previous elections. In addition, large sections of unemployed were disfranchised this year through forced migration, inability to pay poll tax, etc. Among these exploited and disfranchised masses, unquestionably a larger proportion than among the mass of the voters were already consciously opposed to the Roosevelt New Deal.

2. A superficial view of the results of the elections would indicate that the voters have given an overwhelming endorsement of the Roosevelt "New Deal" policies. To understand the meaning of the election results we must, however, at once bear in mind the two-fold character of the "New Deal", namely, the class nature of the Roosevelt policies carried through in the interests of finance capital, and the heavy coat of "Left" demagogy and security promises with which Roosevelt tries to cover up the "New Deal" policies.

The Roosevelt government and the ruling class whose interests

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it represents are already developing with greater cynicism and speed the attack on the living standards of the workers immediately following the elections. This whole attack now is being carried through under the slogan of "recovery before reform" through which they hope to fool the masses into believing that the crisis can be solved in the interests of the masses on the basis of greater "temporary sacrifices" on the part of the masses. This represents nothing more than the general policy of the capitalists to try to get out of the crisis at the expense of the workers.

The Roosevelt government, having carried through the election fraud on the masses, now feels more secure in its position to attack the masses, although accompanied by new demagogy, which must be exposed. But a careful analysis of the election results will indicate that such attacks will be met with the greatest resistance on the part of the very same masses who voted for the Roosevelt "New Deal" candidates, because they did not yet understand the class nature of the "New Deal" and were still fooled by the Roosevelt promises and demagogy.

3. The central questions are: (a) why did the great masses still vote for Roosevelt and (b) why did the Communist Party not gain a larger vote in the face of the undoubted radicalization and the growing influence of the Party in the daily mass struggles? The answer is to be found in: (a) the specific characteristics of the election maneuvers of American monopoly capital and the two-party system, and the assisting role of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and S.P. reformism; (b) the still existing lack of Bolshevik mass work on the part of the C.P. organizations, especially in the factories and unions; (c) the weaknesses and errors during the election campaign.

4. The election maneuvers of the monopolies to put across the class line of the American bourgeoisie (to save capitalism by a capitalist way out of the crisis, through more rapid fascization and war preparation) aimed to achieve the following results:

(a) To strengthen the government machinery for further attacks upon the standards of the masses, a faster tempo of fascization and war preparations.

(b) To prevent a large increase in the Communist vote.

(c) To check the crystallization of a "third party" in order to maintain the "two-party" system.

5. The results of the elections show that the maneuvers of monopoly capital, though largely successful, *are not fully so*, and that these successes are bound to prove *temporary*. The large vote for Roosevelt, contrary to the usual recession occurring in mid-term, and followed by the "reconciliation" of the monopolies with

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Roosevelt, apparently strengthens the governmental machine for the carrying out of the program of the monopolies formulated by the Liberty League, Durable Goods Committee, Chambers of Commerce, Bankers Associations, etc. But the very huge vote for Roosevelt, given him by the masses under the impression that he will champion their interests, will now, when he more openly develops his policies, drive these masses to the realization of the fraud carried through and accelerate the break away from Roosevelt, provided our Party is able to expose the new demagogy accompanying the increasing attacks on the masses, and develop broad united actions of the masses.

The huge Roosevelt vote does not constitute on the part of wide masses approval of the "New Deal" attacks on the masses. On the contrary, the vote was obtained through: (a) illusions that the "New Deal" will abolish the crisis and bring immediate relief; (b) because masses who already were skeptical with the "New Deal", or impatient, refused to go back to the old way by voting for the Republican Party, since they conceived of "practical politics" only through the two old parties; (c) through tremendous mass demagogy and promises and fraud, aided by the attacks of the "New Deal" as radical, carried on by the old guard Republicans; (d) through the use of the bureaucratic machine, control of relief funds, etc.

The dispirited manner, the manifest lack of mass enthusiasm for and faith in the newest "Left" demagogy of the "New Deal", which accompanied the casting of the mass vote for Roosevelt, the greater increase in abstentions from voting of those eligible to vote, are already showing a weakening of the "New Deal" illusions; and the inevitable fresh collisions of the masses (the maturing strikes in the basic industries, unemployed struggles, farmer movements, Negro movements) with the "New Deal" in the coming months, make it reasonably certain that, far from being checked by Roosevelt's victory, the growth of the revolutionary upsurge will receive new impetus from the unfolding capitalist offensive, which became emboldened by the results of the elections. In view of this, the strengthening of the government machine cannot but prove short-lived.

6. No new third bourgeois party has arisen nationally in these elections. But the situation by states is checkered. In Minnesota, the F.L.P., though with a reduced majority, has maintained itself as the major party. In Wisconsin, the LaFollette Progressive Party established itself. In California, Sinclair's EPIC movement was in reality a "third" party movement, only technically part of the national Democratic Party, and the over 800,000 votes cast for Sinclair indicate the advanced stage of the process of political realign-

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ment in that state. In Oregon and Washington we have similar developments. This shows that the "two-party" system is cracking and that the process of political realignment, aided by the defeat of the Republican Party (which, however, must not be underestimated—13 million votes were cast for the Republican Party) is bound to become more accelerated by the general sharpening of the class struggle. More and more it will be impossible to fool the masses, to keep them chained to capitalism through the "two-party system". Undoubtedly the bourgeoisie and its agents will try to trap the masses and keep them chained to capitalism through a "third" capitalist party. Our Party must be aware of this growing danger and on the alert, exposing this danger, every maneuver in this direction, and crystallize the motion of the masses in the direction of independent class political action, in support of the Communist Party and its united front program.

7. The Communist vote in all states registered a significant rise, (though relatively small) with the exception of certain cities in Minnesota and Bridgeport, Conn. Not even the very effective Sinclair demagogy, insufficiently combatted by us, which well-nigh annihilated the S.P. vote for Governor in California, could prevent a rise in the C.P. vote. In this, the leading role of the C.P. in the Maritime and General Strikes found a direct but partial expression. In Minnesota and Bridgeport, the general laxity in the unfolding of daily mass struggles by the C.P. organizations, inability to expose correctly the reformist role and governmental records of the S.P. and F.L.P., whose good chances of winning the elections (especially the F.L.P.) strengthened the illusions of the masses.

One of the difficulties confronting the Communist Party in these elections, which was very insufficiently attacked (although formulated by the Central Committee of the Party) was the mood of the more advanced sections of the masses (the radicalized masses who wage a class war in strikes) to fall for the reformist panaceas. Some of these masses even voted for the Democrats only for fear that Republicans may be elected (Pa. mining towns), other sections voted for the "progressive" parties' candidates as being "better" than the Democrats; in California they voted for Sinclair's EPIC, first in the Democratic primaries to stave off the "old guard" Democrats, and next in the elections to stave off Merriam. The huge votes for third party candidates where they presented themselves to the masses is a definite indication both of the weakening of the two-party system, as well as the beginnings of mass disillusionment in Roosevelt, which the bourgeoisie is trying to stem through these new third-party illusions. Moved by the desire to secure *immediate* relief from the intolerable misery, still doubtful of the election

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chances of the C.P. candidates, and in the mistaken belief that the "successful" "Left" bourgeois candidates will do something for them, large masses have given their votes to such candidates. The A. F. of L. "non-partisan" policy, which in these elections was fully mobilized in support of Roosevelt and "New Deal" candidates; and S.P. reformism, which cultivates the illusions of bourgeois democracy, which everywhere paves the way for fascism, the S.P. reformism which produced the Sinclair EPIC—these contributed a large share, especially the A. F. of L. "non-partisan" policy, practiced also by many S.P. trade union bureaucrats, in obstructing the expression in the elections of the growing radicalization of the masses. Poor work in the A. F. of L. unions and among the toiling farmers and their mass organizations, upon which the F.L.P. rests, is an additional reason in Minnesota where opportunist capitulations to F.L.P. influences manifested themselves in a few points.

8. The increase of the Communist vote, which in a number of industrial towns and election districts in big cities showed a marked increase, for the first time equaling or excelling the vote of the Socialist Party, is directly traceable to our correct revolutionary work along the lines laid down in the Open Letter. At the same time the weaknesses which led to a decline of our vote in Bridgeport and certain cities in Minnesota express a general weakness which found expression especially here because of the relatively greater activities of the reformists.

These weaknesses, which are, of course, interrelated, express:

(a) General fundamental weaknesses as indicated in the Open Letter.

(b) Special weaknesses arising from the approach to and conduct of the parliamentary struggle.

9. *On the fundamental weakness of the still existing lack of Bolshevik mass work.* It is necessary, proceeding from the Open Letter and the Resolutions of the Eighth Party Convention, to point out the following:

(a) Still relatively weak position of revolutionary work in the trade unions despite recent progress: the tardy, slow manner in which the Party organizations took up the major task of *revolutionary* work in such unions of the A. F. of L., as in mining, steel, textile, automobile, marine, longshore, railroad and steel.

(b) Continued neglect to *politicalize* the economic struggles of the workers, the inability, in many instances, to raise these struggles to higher levels and to bring forth the C.P. as *the political party* of the American proletariat and leader of all exploited. Experience shows, what should be well known to every Communist, that the masses by themselves, even as a result of the sharpest economic

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struggles, do not arrive at a full understanding of the correctness of and need of the Party program. This can be achieved only if, on the basis of these struggles, the masses are consciously guided and developed. This continues to go hand in hand with the inability *to concretize* the general political slogans of the Party to conditions of various localities and situations. The slogans of the Party for the struggle against fascization and war, with the central slogan for Soviet Power, as a rule, are not sufficiently linked up with the daily mass work in the economic struggles or they are presented as something separate and detached from these struggles.

(c) The tactic of the united front is still not being applied with the necessary persistence and flexibility. Here we point especially to our lack of readiness to extend the united front locally also to the election field (with local unions, S.P., etc.) particularly in industrial communities, in mining, textile, steel, etc.

(d) Despite certain undoubted progress, the still existing weakness of the Party organizations in the concentration points, lack of systematic and correct Party recruiting and Party building. As a rule, where the Party grows, so does its influence register in the elections.

(e) Insufficient and not always effective exposure of the "non-partisan" policy of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, S.P. and F.L.P. reformism as the handmaids of the "New Deal", and lack of widespread agitation for independent working class political action, in alliance with the toiling farmers, and for mass break-aways from bourgeois parties.

10. *On the special weaknesses and errors of the election campaign*:

(a) While the class line of the proletariat (the struggle against fascization and war as the road to the revolutionary way out of the crisis), as embodied in the election program of the C.P., was on the whole correctly presented to the masses, the "New Deal", as well as the Republican maneuvers, were insufficiently exposed and the effectiveness of this presentation was weakened by several main shortcomings in the election work. The election struggle was very insufficiently *brought into the factories, unions (especially A. F. of L.) and other mass organizations of workers, Negroes and toiling farmers.* The election struggle of our local organizations was not sufficiently concrete, little utilization of local struggles (relief, strikes, Negro rights, terror, etc.) and exposure of the individual opposing candidates in the various localities.

(b) The very slow unfolding of the election struggle, locally and nationally, also in the *Daily Worker*, due mainly to a certain degree of underestimation of the importance of these elections also

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from a *national* point of view. Such underestimation was even expressed in the failure, in some states, to take full measures to secure the Party place on the ballot. In Illinois, by failing to secure more signatures, we made it easier for the government to rule us off the ballot, although we did secure 2,000 more than the required number. In Rhode Island the required number was not collected.

(c) The already indicated lack of readiness to extend the local united fronts also to the elections in certain communities, while retaining the full political and organizational independence of the Communist Party.

(d) Great insufficiency in the exposure of the Olsens, LaFollettes, EPIC, Utopia, Huey Long demagogy, etc., and similar movements which are a reflection of great ferment of the masses, the inability to control this ferment through the two-party system and the preparations of fascist and semi-fascist organizations and movements for the suppression of the growing class battles.

(e) Special attention was lacking nationally to utilize the Scottsboro case, the developing movements for Negro rights.

11. The September, 1934, meeting of the Central Committee of the C.P. clearly formulated the perspective of the growing revolutionary upsurge which in the elections found as yet little direct reflection. The tasks arising therefrom can be summed up in the proposition: *More Intensive Realization of the Measures of the Open Letter. Specifically, further unfolding of the strike struggles —a major task; the more intensive organization of the resurgent unemployed struggles, the struggles of the toiling farmers and of the Negroes.* Proceeding from the immediate economic demands of the workers, we must especially concentrate on *the politicalization of these struggles, bringing forth the C.P. as the political party of the working class.* The slogan of *independent working class political action, in alliance with the toiling farmers,* for mass break-aways from the bourgeois parties, must always be in the foreground in our mass work. The united front, especially in the industrial towns, must be extended to include the struggle in local elections to embrace the unions, the S.P. locals, and mass organizations generally on the basis and continuation of united front for daily struggles for basic and immediate economic and political needs of the masses. We must expose the fraudulent moves of sections of the reformist A. F. of L. bureaucracy, jointly with the S.P. bureaucrats, to present their top combination for collaboration with the "New Deal" as a "Labor Party" of independent action. More than before, it is necessary to fight the danger of Farmer-Laborism along the lines analyzed in the Open Letter. *The effectiveness of all this work depends, in the first instance, upon the successful building of the Party in the concen-*

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tration points and in a radical and rapid improvement of our trade union work along the lines of the recent decisions of the Political Bureau.

12. All Party organizations should immediately carry through a thorough examination of the election results in their localities and especially of the work of the Party in the elections. These examinations, experiences, lessons, will help us to understand and solve the problems confronting the Party, especially in developing the proper slogans and methods for the acceleration of the process of breaking the workers away from the capitalist parties and leading them on the road of independent political action. In subsequent editorials we shall treat this question more fully.

The discussion of the results of the elections must serve to begin at once systematic preparations for the local spring elections which will take place in many states.

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Developments in the United Front

By ALEX BITTELMAN

IT IS our purpose to review briefly our united front struggles since March, 1933. We do this in order to gain a fuller understanding of what has happened and of the tasks confronting us at present.

But, it may be asked, why only since March, 1933? The reason should be obvious. The coming of Hitler-fascism into power, and the subsequent growth of fascization all over the imperialist world, have brought about "great alterations in the working class and in the working class movement". (O. Piatnitsky, "Questions of the International Trade Union Movement", *Inprecorr*, No. 56). Comrade Piatnitsky finds a double process taking place "after the temporary defeat of the working class movement in Germany, in January, 1933, and the disintegration of the German Social-Democracy, and in particular after the events of February, 1934, in Austria". (*Ibid.*)

What is the nature of this double process? "Disappointment with the policy of reformism showed itself in the ranks of the workers, and many of them turned their backs on the social-democratic parties. In addition there developed a strong urge on the part of the workers towards the establishment of the united working class front. In some cases this was seen in a demand for organizational unity, and in others in the going over of the most class conscious sections of the reformist workers to the Communist Party." (*Ibid.*) This double process is taking place everywhere in the imperialist and colonial world, but is developing unevenly, taking on especially rapid tempos in countries where the general crisis of capitalism is deepest, such as Germany, Austria, etc. Moreover, "the changes which have taken place in the working class and in the working class movement have occurred under the conditions of severe economic crisis and of an intensifying crisis of capitalism". (*Ibid.*) It is this fact which gives the present urge of the masses towards unity of action its peculiar characteristics in distinction from the similar mass urge in 1918-1920. In what way?

In 1918-1920, the social-democratic and trade union leaders, while ruthlessly suppressing the revolutionary movement (Germany, Austria, etc.), were still able to hold out before the workers the

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promise of various reforms in which the masses felt interested. This enabled Social-Democracy to maneuver in order to check the mass urge towards the united front. At the present time the reformist leaders are in no such position to maneuver. They can offer the workers nothing because the chief policy of the bourgeoisie everywhere is to get out of the crisis at the expense of the workers. And in this the reformist leaders support the bourgeoisie. Naturally, in a country like the United States, where the maneuvering powers of the capitalists are still considerable and are larger than those of the capitalists of other countries, the reformist leaders here have also larger maneuvering possibilities than have their German or Austrian brethren. But in the U.S. also these maneuvering possibilities—the offer of reforms—are constantly narrowing down, due to the deepening crisis and sharpening class struggle. The consequence is that the reformist leaders find it ever more difficult to check the mass urge of the American workers (and other toilers) towards the united front for which the Communist Party is fighting.

The Communists have always advocated and fought for the united front, the unity of action of all workers, regardless of political affiliation, against the common enemy. The very rise of the Communist International, and of Communist Sections all over the world, was directed towards the unification of the working class split by imperialism and Social-Democracy. What has been happening since March, 1933, was that the workers in the reformist organizations and the unorganized have also begun to see the vital need of the united front. And it is this that created the necessity for the Communist Parties to make special efforts to bring about such united fronts. The united front has become more possible, more realizable.

It was in response to these changes in the situation that the Communist International issued (March, 1933) the now famous appeal to the workers of all countries for the organization of the united front. In this appeal the Executive Committee of the Communist International recommended to the Communist Parties of the various countries "to approach the Central Committees of the Social-Democratic Parties belonging to the Labor and Socialist International with proposals regarding joint actions against Fascism and against the capitalist offensive". This appeal of the Communist International was published in the *Daily Worker* on March 18, 1933, accompanied by a statement of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the C.P.U.S.A., saying that it "fully agrees with the Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International for achieving the unity of the workers in the struggle against the capitalist offensive and fascism". It further stated that "the Political Bureau of

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the Party will, during the next few days, make public concrete proposals for the realization of such united action of all workers" and that "these proposals will be made specifically to the Socialist Party, the Conference for Progressive Labor Action and the American Federation of Labor". These proposals were made public in a statement by the Central Committee of the C.P.U.S.A., published in the *Daily Worker,* March 30, 1933.

This statement said: "The need for working class unity was never before more urgent than at the present time. Only through a solid fighting unity of the masses can the living standards of the toilers be maintained, can the attempts to lower these standards be defeated, and the mass resistance to fascism and the increasing war danger be developed". It was at the time when the New Deal was coming into existence and at the lowest point of the economic crisis. The Communist Party, proceeding from its Leninist analysis of the New Deal as a sharper turn of the American bourgeoisie towards fascization and war, in contradistinction to the Socialist Party analysis of the New Deal as "a step to socialism" (Thomas), in the statement of the Central Committee of the C.P.U.S.A., proposed a program of united front struggle to meet the oncoming capitalist offensive.

Specifically the Communist Party proposed to the Socialist Party (and to the A. F. of L. and to the Muste group) to join in a united front to fight jointly for the following demands of the American masses:

> "1. Against Roosevelt's hunger and war program; against forced labor, against wage cuts; for increased wages to meet rising prices; for adequate relief to the unemployed without discrimination against Negroes or foreign-born; for shorter hours without reduction in pay; and for relief for the small farmers.
>
> "2. For federal unemployment insurance; against the proposed unemployment 'reserve' bills.
>
> "3. For the workers' rights, for the release of Tom Mooney, the Scottsboro boys, and all political prisoners; against police terror, against deportations, and against injunctions in labor disputes.
>
> "4. Against fascist terror and anti-Semitism in Germany; for the release of Thaelmann and all imprisoned anti-fascist fighters; for material support to the revolutionary movement of Germany.
>
> "5. For the immediate withdrawal of the Japanese forces from China, for the defense of the Chinese people, for the stopping of munition shipments to Japan; against the imperialist war policy of Wall Street, particularly now in the Far East and in Latin America.
>
> "6. For the recognition of the Soviet Union by the United States; against imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union."

It will be recalled that the united front appeal of the Communist International, and the subsequent proposals of our Party to the

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Socialist Party (March 30), had made a deep impression upon large numbers of Socialist workers and others. The urge of the workers in the reformist organizations towards a united front with the Communist Party had received a powerful impetus. Moreover, some of the more conscious and advanced Socialist workers began to come into the Communist Party (California, etc.). But the leadership, on the other hand, started a series of maneuvers. While the National Executive Committee kept silent on the matter, the *New Leader* (issues of March 11 and 18) was giving the "line", but not without hesitation and uncertainty. On March 11, the *New Leader* wanted to hope (!) that the Comintern proposal was "genuine" and that "it will lead to fruitful cooperation", between the two Internationals; on the question of united action between the Communist and Socialist Parties in the United States—not a word. But this question could not be evaded for long for the primary reason that the Communist Party was going ahead with its appeals to the masses from below, calling for united action on such issues as unemployment insurance and relief, the fight for the release of Tom Mooney, etc. —issues that found sympathetic response among the Socialist rank and file.

Hence we find, in the *New Leader* of March 18, a resolution of the New York Executive Committee of the S.P. which undertakes to block immediate united front actions in the United States. This was the resolution of the Right wing (the New York group), and in it one thing stands out definitely: *instead of* a united front with the Communist Party, Waldman & Co., propose a "united front" with the reactionary bureaucracy of the A. F. of L. The resolution calls it "a real united front with the organized American workers". As for the Second International, the resolution does not even promise to wait for or be bound by its decisions. It attacks the "insincerity" of the Communists and orders "all comrades, branches and affiliated organizations, to refrain from joining any so-called 'United Front' conferences with Communists". But under the growing pressure from below, the City Executive Committee of the S.P. of New York (the Right wing which still dominated the N.E.C.) feels compelled to execute a little "strategic retreat". It adopts a resolution (March 22) saying: "The City Executive Committee of the Socialist Party, having before it a letter sent to Socialist Party *branches* by the Communist Party for a united front, calls the attention of the party members to the fact that a real united front is possible *only on an international and national basis*" (*New Leader*, March 25. Our emphasis). The maneuver is transparent. Having failed to check the urge for the united front on the part of the S.P. rank and file, stimulated by the activities of the Communists from

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below, the Waldman group felt compelled to "promise" a united front "on an international and national basis". This they could easily afford, for the reason that they still controlled the N.E.C., and could block the thing there; and internationally they could "promise" many things without exposing themselves too directly.

Norman Thomas, who was repeatedly declaring himself in favor of the united front *in words*, was adopting the position of the Right wing *in deeds*. Simultaneously with the above resolution, Thomas publishes a small item on the united front (*New Leader*, March 25) saying: "The best way to get a united front is through negotiations between the Internationals of the workers". Compare this with what the same Thomas wrote a little while earlier: "I should favor making some try at it (the united front) in America *without waiting for the loosely knit Second International to act*" ("The Choice Before Us". Our emphasis). However, the pressure from below continues to grow, and this finds a certain reflection, very much distorted and incomplete, at the City Convention of the S.P. (N.Y.) held on April 1. A strong minority challenges the anti-united front resolution of the City Executive, but, unfortunately, this minority finds no better leadership than J. B. Matthews, and its effectiveness, therefore, is considerably diminished. Nevertheless it suffices to make the Right wing "promise" a national and international united front —but not in New York; and it also suffices to make Thomas write a little longer item on the united front, expressing himself generally in favor of negotiations between the two parties as well as between various locals of the two parties—Communist and Socialist. Incidentally, Norman Thomas was then still in the *minority* in the N.E.C., fighting for a majority, and preparing for this fight at the forthcoming Detroit Convention of the S.P.

And what did Thomas write on April 15? He said: "In the meantime experiments on the united front for particular objects should be carefully considered by Socialist local and state organizations, and the results of such experiments reported to the Party. I for one favor the immediate creation of a sub-committee of the National Executive Committee to meet a similar Committee of the Communists to explore possibilities for common action". (*New Leader.*) This is how Thomas tipped his hat to the Leftward moving rank and file. But, at the same time, he finds it necessary to reassure also the Right wing. He therefore continued: "I repeat that the basis of common action is good faith and although our Communist friends [!] have made some improvement in their attitude lately, neither the form of their invitation nor their accompanying action give one all the assurances [!] that ought to be desired and good faith." (*Ibid.*) Thomas says here in effect to the Right wing: now,

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don't become frightened at my seemingly favorable attitude to the united front. Look how many loopholes I have left for us to crawl out from under in case of need. But Thomas goes even further. He says: "Meanwhile from a purely practical point of view we must not forget that the problems of a united front against Fascism tactically involve at least as much our relations with workers [!] *to the right of us* as to the Communists to the left of us. The times call for all the wisdom we have." (*Ibid.* Our emphasis.) In saying this, which is tantamount to partial endorsement of the Right wing position of "instead of a united front with the Communists, a combination with the reactionary A. F. of L. bureaucracy", Thomas has half capitulated to Waldman & Co. Nevertheless, Thomas did make a certain move favorable to the united front. At the April, 1933, meeting of the N.E.C. of the S.P. he voted for a motion (proposed by Krzycki) "providing for a committee to meet a committee of the Communist Party to discuss united action". (*New Leader,* April 22, 1933.) The motion was defeated by a vote of 6 to 5.

However, the reasons given by Thomas in favor of the motion were very curious. We quote from the *New Leader*: "Comrade Thomas wrote that he 'could not too strongly urge the adoption of this proposal'. He declared his belief that the party may be harmed if '*we can be made to appear to be blocking any kind of united action*', but he was skeptical whether 'the Communists will undertake united action on honorable terms'. *For the sake of our own members and especially the younger people 'it must be made obvious that it is they (Communists) who sabotage the united front, not we who disdainfully reject it'.*" (*Ibid.* Our emphasis.) Talking about the united front being a maneuver, and about "good faith", etc—is there anything more clearly in the nature of a maneuver than the above argumentation of Thomas "in favor" of the united front?

The significance of all this intensified maneuvering lies in this: it shows the growing effectiveness of the Communist Party's struggle basically for the united front *from below* carried on *simultaneously* with the proposals for a united front also from above. In fact, there would be very little hope of ever securing a united front from above if there were not a growing movement in the reformist organizations from below. The united front in France between the Socialist and Communist Parties resulted precisely from a successful fight by the Communists for the united front from below. The truth of this is demonstrated graphically, almost statistically, by the maneuvers of Thomas himself. See: May First, 1933, was organized by the Communist Party on a relatively broad united front platform, with special appeals to the Socialist Party and its organi-

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zations to join in this united front. This was largely successful in many places, notably in New York, several places in Connecticut, etc. Thomas sees this urge from below and hastens to write the following: "This makes me renew my proposal that our National Executive Committee should appoint a sub-committee to deal with the Communists on the whole matter. *We cannot afford to be outmaneuvered and made to appear in the role of those who reject offers of a united front.*" (*New Leader*, May 6, 1933. Our emphasis.) This is how the united front from below helps to bring about the united front from above which the N.E.C. of the S.P. now controlled by Thomas, still continues to evade.

A milestone in the united front developments in the United States were the February, 1934, events in Austria. The Communist Party of the United States can proudly point to the fact that it boldly came forward with the slogan of the united front to embrace and organize the powerful wave of class solidarity of the American workers in support of their Austrian brothers, in support of their armed struggle against the advance of fascism. Nor was the Communist Party slow in pointing out to the American workers, especially those in the reformist organizations, the treacherous role of Austro-Marxism (the then "Left" of the Second International) and its complete bankruptcy. But the Socialist Party, as a party, *did not respond* to the united front offers of the Communist Party, not even at the time when it meant defending the lives of Austrian Socialist workers, fighting hand in hand with the Communists, from the vengeance of the Dollfuss government. The Socialist Party permitted its Right wing to dictate the policy of the party with the result that, instead of uniting with the Communists, the New York organization combined with Matthew Woll, the blackest of the black (and with LaGuardia) to fight—fascism; in reality to fight the Communists and the truly Left elements in the Socialist Party itself. It was a deliberate provocation by the panic-stricken Right wing to check the powerful mass urge for the united front, even at the cost of bloodshed. And in this, unfortunately, the Right wing has *partly* succeeded; but, fortunately, *only for a very short time.* But what did Thomas do? As usual, a mild word of reproach for Woll and the Right wing provocateurs but sharp censure for the Communists and more "skepticism" on the possibility of the united front. And this was exactly what Waldman & Co. needed of Thomas at the time. Yet, despite the provocative tactics of the Right, which was preparing a regular crusade against the Communists following the Madison Square Garden meeting (a crusade which collapsed as quickly as it rose); and despite the waverings of Thomas; and also despite the "retreat" from the united front of J. B. Matthews,

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a leader of the "more Left" R.P.C.; the mass urge for the united front began to reassert itself with even greater force and more consciousness. And this was the reason why the overwhelming majority of the delegates at the Detroit Convention of the S.P. (May, 1934) were against the Right wing. It was on the wave of this urge for the united front and for action against fascization and war in the Socialist Party ranks that Thomas secured his majority in the N.E.C. Decisive in the reassertion of this mass urge for the united front among all workers were their experiences with the New Deal, which confirmed fully the Communist Party position as against that of the Socialist Party and William Green; decisive for this urge for united action, which found a very incomplete and distorted reflection in the Detroit majority, were the unfolding class battles of the American workers against the New Deal and the active role of the Communist Party in these struggles. Remember Toledo, Minnesota, Montana, etc.

It was under these circumstances that the Central Committee of the Communist Party addressed its Open Letter "To the Members of the Socialist Party and the Delegates at its National Convention" in Detroit. This was an offer of united front actions between the two parties, for a set of demands which wide masses of workers had endorsed and were fighting for on the picket lines, in unemployed demonstrations, in their unions, etc. Among the proposals were: (1) For wage increases "to overcome the declining standard of living brought about by the Roosevelt 'New Deal'", for the shortening of the work week, against company unionism, for strike struggles to win the above demands, for a joint struggle in the unions against the treacherous policies of Green & Co. (2) For the enactment of the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill (H. R. 7598). (3) For the Farmers Emergency Relief Bill. (4) For the Bill for Negro Rights and to Suppress Lynching. (5) For a united struggle against war and fascism "along the lines of the program of the American League Against War and Fascism". (6) "For the broadest possible united action in localities, in the factories and trade unions on every question affecting the workers and toiling masses, to win better working conditions, relief for the unemployed, etc., and to build and unify the existing mass organizations of the working class." (*Daily Worker*, May 26, 1934.)

The Detroit Convention did not reject this offer; it couldn't be done in the face of the united front urge from below. Besides, it is safe to assume that a considerable number of delegates were themselves sincerely in favor of the united front. But they let themselves be overpowered and outmaneuvered by Thomas and some of the week-kneed leaders of the R.P.C., who themselves were terror-

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ized by the Right wing and frightened at their own victory. Result: the Communist Party offer was referred to the incoming N.E.C. for action. It is quite likely that many of the sincere adherents of the united front among the delegates in Detroit let themselves be persuaded that the N.E.C., in which Thomas had a majority, would certainly act favorably on the Communist proposals. Now, however, they know better. Nearly six months have passed but the Thomas' N.E.C. has not yet come around to act favorably on the united front with the Communist Party. At the same time, the movement for the united front has been making steady headway among the ranks and local organizations of the Socialist Party.

The Communist Party had no intention of letting the matter rest quietly in the archives of the N.E.C. of the S.P. Our Party, through the *Daily Worker* and otherwise, proceeded to agitate and fight for immediate united front actions with various locals and branches of the S.P., but, for a while, not systematically and stubbornly enough. Our Party membership and local organizations were not quick enough to realize that it is the branches and locals of the Socialist Party, especially those of working class composition, that we must try to win for immediate common actions on a local scale: C.P. unit and S.P. branch; C.P. section and S.P. local; Communists and Socialists in the trade unions, in the various unemployed movements, etc. This is what will produce the united front from above, just as it is already producing, on a small scale as yet, the united front from below. It should also be said, by way of self-criticism, that the lack of *a more direct* approach of our Party to the genuinely Left delegates at the Detroit Convention of the S.P. couldn't but give the impression of a certain aloofness from and insufficiently intimate interest in the outcome of the Detroit Convention on our part. Certainly, we do not want to give any such impressions. The further spread and deepening of the genuine Leftward movement in the S.P. expressed chiefly in its proletarian members, is of vital importance to the united front with the Socialist Party, and for this we must work more systematically and energetically than heretofore.

In preparation for August First (International Anti-War Day), the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Earl Browder, addressed himself with "A Serious Word to the Socialist Party" for joint actions. (*Daily Worker*, July 14, 1934.) It produced no official reply from the Socialist Party N.E.C. controlled by Thomas since the Detroit Convention, but it stimulated further the efforts of the S.P. rank and file to achieve such a united front. On August 17, Comrade Browder reminded Thomas again of the failure of the N.E.C. of the S.P. to act on the C.P. letter referred to the N.E.C. by the Detroit Convention and proposed an immediate pre-

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liminary discussion of the C.P. offer. This time Norman Thomas replied, saying: "I expect to take up the entire matter at the meeting of the N.E.C. of the Socialist Party over Labor Day". (*Daily Worker*, August 25, 1934.) Thomas evades a direct answer to the proposal for preliminary discussion. At the same time, he puts forth the idea that the united front "cannot be achieved if your Party still regards it as primarily a weapon to destroy the Socialist Party or for leadership". (*Ibid.*) Comrade Browder replies to this at length, showing that "The Communist Party regards united action as primarily a weapon to protect the immediate needs of the workers and other toiling elements of the population, to defeat the attacks of the capitalists upon their living standards and civil rights, and to prepare the masses through their experiences in the struggle for the tasks involved in moving forward to greater aims. The Communist Party's attitude toward other parties and groups is determined by their contribution toward achieving these aims". (*Daily Worker*, August 25, 1934.) Comrade Browder concludes by saying: "We repeat our offer of direct conversations to this end." (*Ibid.*) This repeated offer was not accepted by the N.E.C. of the S.P.

Through the months of July and August, 1934, all of the District organizations of the Communist Party were systematically approaching the respective S.P. organizations and their branches for united front struggles on specific issues, reflected and stimulated by the *Daily Worker*. This was followed by similar activities on the part of many sections and units of the C.P. in all parts of the country. The strike wave was mounting. Soon came the maritime strike on the Pacific Coast and the General Strike of San Francisco. The Communist Party proved its leadership in these historic struggles; it proved itself the organizer of the unity of action of the masses, of the united front. The rising terror and capitalist offensive stimulated further the mass urge for united action. All these developments could not but strengthen the determination of the S.P. membership, of many of its branches and locals, to take up at once the Communist offer of united front and to begin to organize common actions. These developments begin to show themselves in New Orleans, in Southern Illinois, in various parts of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. S. P. organizations begin to endorse the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill, just as Socialist workers in the unions begin to work for the endorsement of this Bill by their unions. The demand for S.P. affiliation to the American League Against War and Fascism is growing in the S.P., with numerous S.P. members and groups proceeding to affiliate without waiting for the N.E.C. decision. This was the situation confronting the N.E.C. of the S.P. at its Labor Day meeting.

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At this meeting the Communist Party had a committee, led by Comrade Minor, to make a direct offer to the N.E.C. of the S.P. for united front action. *The offer was not accepted.* But the way it was done is significant. The N.E.C., by a majority vote, approved a letter of reply to the Central Committee of the Communist Party in which recognition is paid to "the immense value to the labor movement of united action". Clearly, this was a result of the growing pressure from below. The N.E.C., under Thomas, simply couldn't say less and still retain its waning standing among the rank and file as a leadership "favoring" the united front, in distinction from the open enemies of the united front (Oneal, Waldman, etc.). But, having paid their respects to united action as "a principle", the letter of the N.E.C. proceeds to pile up difficulty upon difficulty on the road of the *practical realization* of this united action. Again we are given long dissertations on the need of "good faith". But hasn't Comrade Browder answered this point conclusively (letter to Thomas of August 24th, 1934) when he said: "The essence of the problem of good faith and fair play can be found in determining concretely what is necessary to fully carry out a particular action"? Hasn't he shown convincingly that good faith is tested only in united action and that, on its part, "the Communist Party is prepared to demonstrate its good faith in any agreement for a united action by the only method through which good faith can be demonstrated, *by carrying through the agreed upon actions* with all of its energy"? (*Ibid.* Our emphasis.)

But to all this plain talk, understandable to every conscious worker, the N.E.C. evidently remained deaf. Moreover, it proceeded (letter of September 6, 1934) to lay the basis for another barrier to the united front between the two parties. It was done diplomatically, and in the following manner: "No united action on specific issues is possible between Socialists and Communists except on the basis which also gives hopes of ending fratricidal strife within the trade union movement". (*Ibid.*) The Central Committee of the Communist Party hastened to secure and establish clarity on this point which, on the face of it, permits of two opposite interpretations. The letter of reply of the Communist Party (*Daily Worker*, September, 15, 1934) therefore proceeds to say: "If the sentence [above quoted] is understood as a call to end fratricidal strife between Socialist and Communist members and followers in the trade unions for united action on concrete issues, then we can only give our wholehearted endorsement to such an objective. . . . But there is another possible and opposite understanding of the sentence quoted from your letter. This opposite interpretation is that to end fratricidal strife really means to end the struggle con-

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ducted by Communists and other revolutionary workers, as well as broad circles of non-party workers, against the policies of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. and its constituent international unions." The Communist Party urges the N.E.C. to explain which of the two interpretations is its own, expressing the hope that "the first, not the second, is the correct interpretation". (*Ibid.*)

The decision of the N.E.C. of the S.P., at its September meeting, was to "postpone consideration of further negotiations between our two parties until our next meeting about Dec. 1". This meant a delay of nearly *three months*, at a time of the unfolding of one of the biggest national strikes in the country—the National Textile Strike—when the need for the utmost unity of action was most acute and the demand for it was rising from all sides among the masses. The responsibility for this lies upon the Thomas leadership of the Socialist Party. But the Communist Party position was: if you want to delay national action by the two parties, that is your responsibility; but let us have local actions between the organizations of the two parties. This the N.E.C. at its September meeting could not refuse outright, not in the face of the growing demand for it on the part of the working class membership of the S.P., and in the face of a number of S.P. locals, groups and individual members already co-operating with the Communists in united front struggles. Hence the N.E.C. decision that "we are aware that there are questions arising from time to time, mostly in the field of civil liberties, in which it is desirable that there shall be effective local action for the defense of workers' rights". (Exchange of letters between S.P. and C.P., *Daily Worker*, September 15, 1934.)

The Communist Party reply to this was to greet such a decision. "The final paragraph in your letter opens up possibilities of local united actions, particularly in defense of workers' rights. We will do everything possible to stimulate such local actions." (*Ibid.*) And this was what the Communist Party actually did, especially in the textile centers where, at the time, the need for such actions was most acute in the face of the fascist terror and methods of civil war let loose by the New Deal against the striking textile workers. But again something happened to obstruct these local actions. And it came from the Thomas leadership of the S.P. In fact, immediately after the September N.E.C. meeting, where such fine sentiments were expressed in favor of united front local actions, Norman Thomas hastened to throw a couple of buckets of cold water upon this same proposition. He wrote, on September 8: "These arrangements emphatically do *not* include the authorization of general united front negotiations between locals and branches of the Socialist Party and Communist committees which may knock at their doors". (*New*

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Leader, September 8, 1934.) This, however, *did not stop* the local organizations of the Communist Party from "knocking at the doors" of the respective organizations of the Socialist Party. The most outstanding example of this is the united front offer of the Communist Party of District 16 (North and South Carolina) to the State Executive Committees of the Socialist Party of North and South Carolina and Georgia. Writing in the midst of the textile strike, the District Committee of the Communist Party, Paul Crouch, Secretary, said: "Today in the South there exists the greatest need for united action in defense of the workers' rights to organize, to strike and to picket. The splendid fight of the embattled textile strikers urgently demands united action in their behalf by developing relief, and defense. A widespread protest movement against the violence and murderous actions is an urgent necessity if the fight of the textile workers, which is the fight of all labor, is to be won." (*Daily Worker*, September 22, 1934.)

This letter has also been sent to Norman Thomas as the leader of the S.P. And what did Thomas do? Unbelievable as it may sound, he actually rejected this offer of *local actions*, under the still more unbelievable pretense that the Communist policy of exposing the treacheries of Gorman & Co. injures the textile strike. In other words, Thomas assumed the task of shielding Gorman's betrayals and of preventing the local actions in the South, and elsewhere, for which the N.E.C. has expressed a favorable attitude in its communication of September 6, 1934. Wherein does this differ from the position of the Right wing (Waldman, Solomon, etc.) in New York, which also rejected the united front offer of the District Committee of the Communist Party of District 2 in support of the textile strike? In reply to Comrade Krumbein's communication, the City Central Committee of the S.P. in New York replied that it has no need of united front action since it is already "co-operating with the union [United Textile Workers Union] and that is the best help we can render to them". But everybody knows that the S.P. leadership of New York was co-operating, not with the striking workers to win the strike, but with Gorman and Rieve (the latter a member of the S.P.) to choke the strike and to betray it. In this situation, Thomas comes along and takes a position against local united front actions in the South. So, we ask again, wherein does he differ from Waldman & Co.? He differs in this: he speaks words favorable to the united front; Waldman & Co. prefer not to use even favorable words. He voted in the N.E.C. in general favor of local united actions; the Right wing voted against it. He *shields* Gorman's treacheries; the Right wing collaborates with Gorman in perpetrating these treacheries. And when it comes to actually *doing*

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something on the united front, Thomas and Waldman & Co. *do the same thing*—they work against the united front. In plain words: *Thomas capitulates to the Right wing.*

This did not and could not slacken the activities of the Communist Party to extend the united front with the Socialist Party, locally and nationally. Every day brings new issues and a sharper need for such actions. For example, the need of solidarity actions with the Spanish workers. The Communist International, in an appeal "To All Members of the Socialist International" and "To the Toilers of All Lands", "calls upon its Sections, in common with other workers' organizations, to organize demonstrations in solidarity with the Spanish working class". (*Daily Worker*, October 12, 1934.) "At the same time the Communist International turns to the workers of the Socialist International with the proposal *for immediate common actions*, as well for the support of the fighting Spanish proletariat as against the support of the Lerroux government by the governments of other capitalist countries. The Communist International instructs Comrade Cachin immediately to ascertain the attitude of representatives of the Second International on the arrangement of concrete forms and the practical carrying through of such united action." (*Ibid.*) A similar appeal was addressed by the Communist Youth International to the Socialist International of Youth.

Despite the fact that every day counted, and that not a minute could be lost in the work of bringing support to the Spanish workers (Socialists, Communists, Syndicalists), the Second International saw fit to postpone action until the middle of November, that is, to delay, on its part, the rendering of support to the Spanish workers *for a whole month.* And when it did finally take up the Comintern offer for "action", it decided to refer the matter back to the constituent parties. This is called, in plain language, passing the buck. But even this we must utilize to promote further the united front.

But what was the position of the Socialist Party of America? On October 11th, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. addressed a communication to the N.E.C. of the S.P. (copy to Norman Thomas) in which it "calls upon the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party to unite with us in a joint call to the American workers for a series of mass demonstrations in all important cities, under our joint auspices, to protest the bloody pogrom of Fascist-monarchist reaction in Spain and to express sympathy and solidarity with the struggling workers and peasants". (*Daily Worker*, October 11, 1934.) Comrade Browder urges, in conclusion, "immediate favorable action". (*Ibid.*) At this writing, a month later, there is as yet no sign of recognition or

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answer from the N.E.C. of the S.P. The Communist Party, naturally, proceeded directly to the masses to carry out the appeal of the Communist International, though, it must be stated, insufficient efforts were made to rally the widest masses of workers, including Socialist workers, for solidarity actions with their Spanish brothers. There was to be observed a dangerous inclination to slacken direct mass work for the united front while "awaiting" the reply of the N.E.C. of the S.P. It goes without saying that nothing can be more harmful to the united front than for the Communists to relax the *direct mass appeal and organization of the united actions between Communists and Socialists and trade unions and unorganized workers.*

On the eve of the forthcoming meeting of the N.E.C. of the S.P., to be held in Boston at the beginning of December, 1934, the movement for the united front with the Communist Party in the ranks and branches of the S.P. is continually growing. Simultaneously the Right wing (Waldman & Co.) is making all preparations to split away from the S.P., fraudulently exploiting the slogan of a Labor Party for this purpose. As to the Thomas leadership, it is frantically wavering in all directions: it seeks to compete with Waldman & Co. for the "winning over" of Sell-Out-Gorman and the other N.R.A. agents in the A. F. of L.; it maneuvers desperately (by "promising" the united front) to retain its waning hold upon the genuinely Leftward moving rank and file of the S.P.; it plays with the renegades (Gitlow & Co.) and flirts with Tammany Lovestone as a "substitute" for the united front with the Communist Party; it permits itself to be terrorized by the Right wing and continues to capitulate to it. At the same time, the "Revolutionary Policy Committee" is beginning to show new signs of life. Having lain practically dormant since the Detroit Convention of the S.P. in May, during which time most of the leading elements of this "Revolutionary" Policy Committee were practically indistinguishable from Thomas & Co., especially on the question of the united front, the policy-makers are once more attempting to assert themselves as an organized group. The tempo of disintegration of the S.P. is increasing.

The most important of these developments is the growing Leftward move of the workers in the S.P. The adoption by the majority of the Declaration of Principles (programmatically a reformist document) which, curiously enough, did not seem to give Thomas much comfort, while imposing upon the S.P. serious obligations favorable to the united front struggle against war and fascism, reflects the Leftward development of the S.P. ranks *in a very indirect and distorted way.* A much more direct and clear reflection of this Leftward growth is to be found in the united front struggles

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of the Socialist workers and branches jointly with the Communist Party in such places as Trumbull County, Ohio, Bethlehem, Pa., Southern Illinois, in parts of Louisiana, Massachusetts. In these cases we deal with Socialist workers in the industries: miners, steel workers, textile workers, etc. Here is where the united front is achieved in daily struggle against the common enemy; here is where the basis is being created for the united front nationally between the Socialist and Communist parties. Next in importance, as showing the growth of the united front in action, are the widening activities of the "Committee for Socialist Action for the United Front", an outgrowth of the participation of a group of S.P. members as delegates to the Second Congress Against War and Fascism. Through this Committee, and otherwise, the movement is growing in the S.P. for affiliation to the Anti-War Congress and for a united front with the Communist Party. In the same line of developments must be placed the conversations between the Italian Bureau of the Communist Party and the Italian Federation of the Socialist Party for a united front agreement proceeding from the common actions of the Communist and Socialist Parties in Italy. And last, but by no means least, the coming together of Socialists and Communists in various localities for common struggle against unemployment and for H. R. 7598, the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill.

These are the developments on which we must center our major attention to promote further the united front.

As to the "Revolutionary Policy Committee", it is necessary to realize that, as a group, it consists of many and varied elements. Undoubtedly there are among them some that are genuinely seeking a revolutionary Socialist policy but even those are still under the delusion that this can be found in something which is not the program of the Communist International. In our programmatic discussions with the members of the Socialist Party, of which we have not had enough by far, it must be our task to show that a revolutionary Socialist policy is possible only on the program of the Communist International which is built upon the foundations of Marxism-Leninism. And in this connection we must also remember that discussion *alone* will not accomplish the task; for this, it is vital to combine the daily united front struggles with theoretical and programmatic clarification. In this way will the Socialist Party workers and the honestly Left elements of the R.P.C. learn from practical experience the correctness of Communist theory and program. That is why our first word to the R.P.C. must be: join us in the united front; fight in your party for winning branches and locals in favor of immediate united front actions with the Communist Party organizations; show by deeds that you are ready and willing to engage

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not only in verbal discussions but in actions that will build the united front and promote the revolutionary development of the American proletariat. Then our programmatic discussions, too, will become deeds that will count in a revolutionary way for the class struggle.

But the "Revolutionary Policy Committee" has also different sorts of people, elements that would seem to be more concerned with checking the drift of the Socialist Party ranks to Communism rather than with promoting *further* their radicalization and revolutionary maturity. It is the type of "Left" that serves objectively (and with some individuals also subjectively) as a screen for the Right. This we must expose. And again: by bringing forward very sharply the question of *immediate* united actions between Socialist and Communist Party organizations. This is at present the touchstone for elementary proletarian class honesty. With people who demonstrate this class honesty in deeds—in the united front—we can discuss all questions of program in a comradely way, with profit to the revolutionary movement. With those, however, who just talk (or write) about revolutionary socialism as against the program of the Comintern, while failing to move a finger to accelerate the united front between the two Parties, our talk must be different. To them we cannot but say: gentlemen, your "Left" talk is not serious; whatever your subjective intentions may be, you are serving as a "Left" cover for the capitulators to the Right (Thomas & Co.), thus shielding the Right wing itself.

It is a bit comical to hear the R.P.C. announce the "discovery" that a united front agreement between the S.P. and the C.P. must be considered as "the first step in a process which should have as its end and objective the galvanizing of the working masses into motion, into class action" (*Revolutionary Socialist Review*, November, 1934, page 4), while at the same time taking categoric issue with the tactic of the united front from below. Did the authors of this editorial ever consider that the tactic of the united front from below aims precisely at bringing about "the galvanizing of the working masses into motion, into class action"? What else is a united front from below, if it is not a united front of the masses, regardless of their Party affiliations, for struggle against the capitalists? But there is also a serious element in this comical performance by the editors of the *R.S.R.* It is their attempt to shove to the background the need for a united front agreement nationally as well as locally *between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party*. The editors of the *R.S.R.* seemingly take it for granted that "In all probability, the next N.E.C. meeting (in December) . . . will see our party, formally, endorse the united front" (*Ibid.*), and therefore "It now becomes necessary to impress upon our party

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and the C.P. the narrowness of this kind of a united front if it remains confined merely to the two". (*Ibid.*) We ask: what concretely is the R.P.C. doing to make certain (or reasonably so) that the December meeting of the N.E.C. of the S.P. will endorse the united front, *not alone formally* but actually, which means the setting up by the N.E.C. of organizational guarantees that it will be carried out? Secondly, what, specifically, is the R.P.C. doing to make sure (or reasonably so) that the endorsement will be given to the united front offers of the *Communist Party*, Section of the Communist International, and not to some "substitute", that is, maneuvering with Gitlow and Lovestone? Somehow, we don't see much of the R.P.C. in the front line trenches where the battle for these things is now taking place. Certainly, it must be agreed that the Communist Party has made its position amply clear, not by words only but by mass activities (in the San Francisco General Strike, in the National Textile Strike, in the mining industry, in steel, etc.) *that it builds the united front among the masses*, in battle, and in the unions, and that it invites the Socialist Party and its members to work *jointly* for the building of such a united front. At the same time, it has also been made amply clear that, as far as the S.P. is concerned, the Right wing is for closer combination with the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and the N.R.A. *versus* the united front. The Thomas leadership is waveringly but definitely capitulating to the Rights, while the working class rank and file and the honest Lefts are actually engaging in the united front with the Communist organizations to build the struggles of the masses. The question is: *where does the R.P.C. stand in this situation?* The high and lofty advice of the quoted editorial in *R.S.R.* "to both parties" to include the masses in the united front does not answer the question. For Waldman, too, claims that his unity with Gorman and the N.R.A. "includes the masses"; and it does: as an object to be betrayed. And Thomas, also, wants to include the masses, but he also wants to shield Gorman's treacheries, and he does not seem to want a united front with the Communist Party. He wants the "good" Communists—Gitlow and Lovestone. Then, again, as distinct from all these fake and anti-working class "unities", there are the growing united fronts of Communist and Socialist organizations which everywhere seek to bring in *the trade unions*, as the main objective, and the unemployed organizations, and all other mass organizations of the workers. This *is* the united front in action. Now which of these ways of bringing the masses into the united front are you for —editors of the *R.S.R.*? Don't you realize that your general phrases of "galvanizing" the working masses, when unaccompanied by a clear statement in favor of the already developing united front

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of the masses, and without deeds supporting this united front, can have but one effect? The effect, namely, of helping all those tendencies, in the S.P. and out, that are working against the united front with the Communist Party?

In view of the foregoing we must continue to apply the tactic of the united front "more daringly and with greater elasticity by opening up a decisive attack on the Social-Democratic leaders and trade union bureaucrats who are sabotaging the struggle for the establishment of the united front". (Piatnitsky, "Questions of the International Trade Union Movement," *Inprecorr* No. 56.) This is the way to achieve the united front. We are for the united front from below as "the basic form of the Communist united front tactics". (*Ibid.*) This does not exclude the application of the united front from above. The Communist Party of the U.S. has been applying the policy of both the united front from below and from above, and in doing so it was guided by the proposition that "It may possibly be seen that in some cases the application of the united front from below is the only possible tactic, but it can never be the case that the application of the united front from above is the only possible tactic". (*Ibid.*)

Now that the Second International Executive has referred the question of the United Front back to its constituent parties, the N.E.C. of the Socialist Party must give a clear answer to the proposals of the Communist Party. The S.P. can no longer say that it must wait for its International to act. While the November (1934) decision of the Second International, referred to above, is in the nature of "passing the buck", still it leaves one thing definite. It is that the national parties are *free to act*, that is, from prohibitions by their International. Hence, the N.E.C. *must act* and, we want to hope, will act favorably to the United Front proposals of the Communist Party.

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The "EPIC" Mass Movement in California

By ROBERT MINOR

(Based on a Report to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and presented in THE COMMUNIST *as a discussion article. —Ed.)*

I. THE NATURE OF SINCLAIR'S DEMAGOGY

ABOUT 850,000 men and women voted for Upton Sinclair for Governor of California. A large proportion of these thought they were voting against the capitalist system and for a "new social order". There can be no doubt that the "EPIC" movement to *"End Poverty in California"* represents a vast stirring of discontent, tending toward high forms of class struggle.

The capitalist class recognized it as such; and if the ruling class was divided between the two traditional capitalist parties the percentage of capitalist strength directed *against* Sinclair must have been above 90. A genuine class fright seized upon the capitalists. The entire capitalist press helped the "EPIC" illusion by attacking Sinclair as a "Communist", resorting to every device of widespread lying, suppression of news, forgery, and stirring of religious hysteria; employers used intimidation against workers, and there were probably a few cases of Vigilante terror against Sinclair followers.

The overwhelming majority of the working class, almost the entire membership of the trade unions, many ruined small farmers, many bankrupt and semi-bankrupt small business people, the general run of declassed intellectuals, and even a sprinkling of capitalist interests, according to all calculations, supported the Democratic Party candidate Sinclair. There were physical clashes on Los Angeles streets, where working class clothing was generally accepted as the mark of Sinclair supporters.

* * *

And yet—Sinclair raised throughout the campaign not one single demand for the economic or political interests of the working class, absolutely not a single thing for the impoverished farmers, precisely nothing for the ruined small business class. On the contrary, the portions of his original "EPIC Plan" which he carried

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through with him to election day constituted the most anti-working class, the most ruinous program as regards the farmers and ranchers and the petty bourgeoisie—in short, the most cold-bloodedly pro-capitalist and reactionary proposals that were offered by any candidate in any election in the United States in a decade.

And half a million earnest and belligerent, poverty-stricken supporters fought bitterly for "EPIC", deeply convinced that they were waging battle against capitalism.

As far as these masses were concerned, they fought under a slogan given them by Sinclair in these words:

> "We confront today the collapse of an institution which is world wide and age old. Capitalism has served its time and is passing from the earth. A new system must be found to take its place." (*Macfadden Weekly*, Nov. 3, 1934.)

* * *

When we see a bourgeois demagogue leading a mass wave "against capitalism"—this alone is enough to give deepest concern to Communists.

What compels the bourgeoisie to resort to such stupendous demagogy?

The winter of 1934-35 is beginning with complete certainty of sharper class tension than any that has been seen before.

The ruling class expects a storm.

The storm has already begun.

The production of steel is at present about 26½ per cent of capacity in the United States, a gain of one-half of one per cent in twelve months, but a loss of 6½ per cent compared with December, 1933. "Staggering" of automobile production "to spread the 1935 car output more evenly throughout the year" seems to be a cover for the manufacturers' fear of a weak market. The number of unemployed is admitted to be 15,000,000, and really is about 18,000,000.

Gigantic issues have been moved forward to the front line of *conscious* struggle. Uppermost in the nightmares of the good bourgeois are: the strike wave—its new and more militant methods, will the Communist Party secure the leadership of it? and second, unemployment—what shall we have to concede this winter?

And what is the center of the fear of the bourgeoisie?

The *Chicago American* expressed this fear very clearly in an editorial September 9:

> *"Despite the disorders which accompanied the textile strike, now settled, we think American labor has earned credit for itself by steer-*

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ing clear of Communist agitators and accepting the mediation of the President's board.

"Whatever the merits of the dispute, it was evident from the first that Communist influences were trying to gain control of it and to 'run away' with it for their own revolutionary purposes.

"President Green of the A. F. of L. issued an admirable warning to the bona-fide labor organizations involved, pointing out the dangers of Red interference and counseling arbitration instead of violence."

It is precisely the fear that these struggles, especially the larger strikes, would slip out of the hands of the top bureaucrats of the A. F. of L. and come into Communist leadership.

* * *

And a perfect flood of the wildest bourgeois demagogy has risen to heights almost incredible in order to meet this situation.

Former Governor Langer of North Dakota would say, when speaking in the farming regions of that State, that he had a program approximately the same as that of the Communists, except that he, "unlike the Communist Party, didn't want to take God away from the people"; and I am informed that his successor, in order to secure a foothold, is offering something of the same kind. Governor Olsen of Minnesota obtained and holds office on the plea that he will "abolish Capitalism by peaceful means". Senator Huey Long rules Louisiana with such legislation as a two-year moratorium on debts.

The national Congressional election was an orgy of demagogy for bourgeois politicians, and resulted in a landslide of votes for what is called a "wild" Congress—a "Left wing" Congress.

* * *

But the sharpest of all extremes of this development of "anti-capitalist" demagogy by candidates of openly capitalist parties is to be found in the California State elections.

And this "EPIC" demagogy of the ex-Socialist is not merely another case of the same thing, but has its own peculiarities.

II. SITUATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The Communists of the California district had gone through a long series of fierce class struggles in the several years preceding this election. During the twelve months before the election the storm arose to its height: the strike wave in the agricultural territory, with many thousands of workers in the grape fields of San Joaquin Valley and Lodi at grips with the most violent wholesale use of "Vigilantes" ever seen—as well as the fishermen's strike of many hundreds,

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and a number of other strikes. The biggest agricultural strike in the history of the United States broke out with 18,000 workers in the cotton fields under the leadership of the Communists and held firm in terrific struggle for four weeks that resulted in a 25 per cent wage raise. The Imperial Valley strike became a historic struggle under courageous Bolshevik leadership against armed private regiments of "Vigilante" gangs. The Communist Party quickly became known to the masses of California as the Party that fights in the interests of the workers.

Then came the long, stubborn longshoremen's struggle—the "strike that could not be broken"; and our Communist Party leadership of the California district was able so to influence this struggle as to spread and raise it to the highest point ever yet attained by a strike in America, the San Francisco General Strike.

In the accomplishment of uniting the working class despite the reformist bureaucracy, our California comrades won a series of victories not only against the most corrupt gang of Mooney-hanging "labor leaders" in the trade unions, but also against the Socialist Party. If our California comrades were able to take over about a third of the rank and file and a number of sincere leading members, an important section of the cadres of the Socialist Party—this was accomplished through genuine Bolshevik fighting in the class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

And for this reason it was all the more necessary to carry the struggle on into the election campaign without letting its level sink but rather raising it to still higher political consciousness.

This was preeminently possible. It was *not Sinclair* that made feasible in this California election the raising before 3,500,000 voters (not to speak of the disfranchised hundreds of thousands of workers) of the fundamental questions of class and property relationships, among which the question of State power itself became a subject of earnest discussion among millions. It was the long, terrific struggles in which Sinclair had no part (except the social-fascist part), but in which the Communist Party of the California district played at times the decisive role—that made possible a great mass wave of willingness to struggle against capitalism and for a "new social order".

But the Communist Party did not lead this mass movement. It was led by a bourgeois demagogue *against* the Communist Party, against the whole content of the San Francisco General Strike, against the most crying demand for unemployment relief and against the farmers' needs.

Let us not ask the impossible. The capitalist dictatorship has a heavy hand in California. The capitalist control of the press, meet-

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ing halls, radio, police, its command and use of the extra-legal violence of Vigilantes; the ferocious terror the bourgeoisie was able to turn loose against the Party from the strike in the grape-fields up to the General Strike (many comrades, including some candidates, spent the election time in jail); the violent suppression of some election campaign meetings, and even the very *structure* of the bourgeois electoral system—made it inevitable that the Communist Party *could not* bring into expression in the election the *whole* of the great mass that the Communists had led or influenced in the strike and unemployment struggles. Long ago Marx called attention to the fact that in a capitalist State it never comes about that the proletarian Party musters in the bourgeois elections the full mass which follows this Party in demonstrations, strikes, etc.; Lenin referred to this in discussing the Russian bourgeois elections in 1917; and this is not unconnected with the inescapable revolutionary necessity for the "hitherto unknown expansion and development of democracy" through the revolutionary workers' council form of State, as described by Lenin. This is not altered by the fact that tremendous use can be made of the bourgeois elections by the workers' Party, which was shown by the Russian and then by the German Bolsheviks.

But no one can refute the charge that some very grave mistakes made by the comrades in California — mistakes of political analysis and of tactical policy—contributed heavily to our inability to lead the mass wave that arose largely out of economic struggles led largely by our Party.

* * *

Realizing that the sharpest single concrete question of struggle before the country today is the question of *unemployment relief*, Henry Ford gave forth some of his gracious wisdom in the remark that Americans do not "want a dole", and that those who receive a dole always turn against those who give it. But the alert watchman of American capitalism, Arthur Brisbane, hastened to correct Ford with the amendment:

> "There is, however, the fact that America doesn't want revolution, for too many dangerous riots, and you may take it from the British that the dole is cheaper than revolution. . . .
>
> "Even with all our billions of dole disguised as 'unemployment relief' there are serious troubles, rioting in Denver, and in Albany, N. Y., increasing activity and violence in striking."

This would seem to indicate that the biggest bourgeoisie itself was beginning to wonder how it would be possible to withhold Federal unemployment insurance another winter. The noisy activities

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of Senator Wagner to find a new and more confusing form for his "unemployment insurance" measure would indicate the same.

And the very heart and soul of Sinclair's program is—*to defeat the movement for unemployment relief and social insurance.*

A year before the election there had been in Los Angeles County a rather strong "Relief Workers' Protective Association" (unemployment council) under Communist leadership, and with the initiative of this organization a very powerful *united front* had been established of more than 200 separate organizations under the decisive influence of the Communist Party. The "barter" movement which had grown like wildfire was drawn into this united front, including a "self-help" organization of 126,000 members. But a misconception of factory concentration, as though it meant less attention to the unemployment movement, seems to have led to a wrong policy under which the united front collapsed. With the disintegration of the united front and the relaxation of the policy of militant struggle for cash relief and unemployment and social insurance, the great mass of the membership of all unemployment organizations sank rapidly back into the swamp of "self-help" illusions and the "barter" system.

Into this situation came Sinclair with a "Plan" to complete the dispersal of the unemployment organizations; to break up all struggle organizations; to ship the bulk of the unemployed out of the cities where, he said, they were being "incited to violence" by the Communists; to establish tent colonies for the exiles on land to be obtained by foreclosures on farms; to place the "self-help" groups under the patronage of the State, and to abolish all payments of unemployed relief. Thus, 1,250,000 California workers were to be cut off from the economic system of the State and isolated in *"a new, self-sustaining world"*, to be forbidden (according to a later development of the Plan) to sell their products in the open market, to be paid no compensation, to be allowed no money whatsoever, and to be confined to "barter" between themselves with the use of *scrip* having no validity as legal tender. Sinclair said:

Sinclair said:

> "The backbone of the Plan is a State system of production for use, to be applied for the benefit of those now unemployed. As matters stand the unemployed are fed at public expense, and this is leading the State into bankruptcy and the nation into inflation. The only solution is to give the unemployed access to land and factories and let them produce what they are going to consume, thus taking them off the taxpayers' backs. . . .
>
> "The seeds of the new system exist all over the State in the form of cooperative groups of the unemployed. They get hold of any old tools, they produce anything, and swap it for what they

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> need with anyone they can find. Whenever they have got production going on any scale, they have been handicapped by the politicians, moved by business interests fearing competition. EPIC proposes to put the power and credit of the State behind these self-help groups and give them a chance to grow." (*Liberty* magazine, Oct. 20, 1934.)

Sinclair's proposal began to absorb into "EPIC clubs" a very large part of the unemployed movement together with a vast mass of ruined middle class men and women, bankrupt small merchants, aged persons whose savings had been lost, etc. One thousand of these "EPIC clubs" sprang up throughout the State, but mostly in Southern California in and around Los Angeles County.

Then a strange phenomenon occurred when the biggest mass organization ever seen in California, appropriately named the "*Utopian Society*", sprang into existence almost overnight with a distinctly petty-bourgeois ideological bias and more than half a million members in the city and county of Los Angeles. The Utopian Society appears as a movement "*against capitalism*", for "*a new profitless society*" and for "*production for consumption*". Amidst a ritual borrowed from secret fraternal orders, its standard mass gatherings are based upon theatrical productions symbolizing the horrors of capitalism, the necessity to eliminate capitalism, and the final triumph of the "new profitless society". It appears to suggest the winning over of the industrial capitalists or at least mercantile capital as an ally of the exploited against the "Moneylender", and—it all comes about, not by revolutionary class struggle, but by *Reason!* For stage-plays of this sort, and the ritual and initiations that go with them, tens of thousands have been meeting more than seven times a week in Los Angeles; 40,000 have been noted in one meeting, and as many as 4,000 new members, it is claimed, joined in one day!

There was no open organizational connection between the Utopian Society and the EPIC clubs. The claim is made, however, that its members voted mainly as a bloc for Sinclair.

The Utopian Society during the late summer became a seething mass earnestly devoted to its "aims" but struggling against its leadership for "democratization" and in the various units beginning earnest discussion of the question whether open class struggle was necessary for its aims.

The leadership of our Party discussed the question of our attitude toward this movement, and decided *not* to penetrate the organization.

About the same time a doctor of Long Beach, Dr. F. E. Townsend, talked over with some friends an idea he had of "revolving"

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old age pensions; the plan being for the government to pay $200 per month to all persons above sixty years old on condition that it all be spent within the month and that the recipients withdraw from all employment. Within a few days Dr. Townsend was at the head of a movement which leaped into mass proportions with a present membership of hundreds of thousands, unless all reports are in error. (All figures given must be taken with a grain of salt, but the "order of magnitude", as astronomers say, is more or less correct.)

III. SINCLAIR'S PLAN

One cannot take the written programs of charlatans as constituting what they would really put through as programs in action. But a study of such a program *in the light of knowledge of the class forces which would be in possession of State power at the time of its application*, can show us clearly what the *real* program is.

With this consideration we examine the "EPIC Plan", which consists of twelve points. The first point is:

> "1. A legislative enactment for the establishment of State land colonies, whereby the unemployed may become self-sustaining and cease to be a burden upon the taxpayers. A public body, the California Authority for Land (the CAL) will take the idle land, and land for taxes and at foreclosure sales, and erect dormitories, kitchens, cafeterias, and social rooms, and cultivate the land using modern machinery under the guidance of experts."

What is the real content of this?

"State land colonies, whereby the unemployed may become self-sustaining and cease to be a burden upon the taxpayers" means two things:

First, the immediate *cutting off of all unemployment relief payments*, which in California means $200,000,000 per year, as Sinclair himself says, and

Second, the *breaking up of all organizations of the unemployed*, and the *dispersing of the unemployed workers and their families* over wide areas away from the cities where, Sinclair claims, they are being "incited to violence" by Communists.

So much for that.

And what is the meaning of: "A public body . . . will take the . . . land sold for taxes and at foreclosure sales, . . ."? This means nothing more than Sinclair's solution for the sharp struggle that is going on all over California and the West between the ranchers and farmers and the bankers and insurance corporations, over *farm mortgages;* and the struggle over tax sales of farms and ranches which really is a struggle between the same forces over the shifting of the burden of taxation.

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The frightful character of this proposal is fully understood when we get Sinclair's explanation that the State funds, $200,000,000 of which per year would be "withdrawn from payment to the unemployed", would be payable to banks and insurance companies holding farm mortgages; the State would pay off mortgages (which everybody knows are uncollectible) to the bankers, but not for the benefit of the farmers! The farmers would be foreclosed, and the land taken for forced labor colonies.

Then let us see Point 2:

> "2. A public body entitled the California Authority for Production (the CAP), will be authorized to acquire factories and production plants whereby the unemployed may produce the basic necessities required for themselves and for the land colonies, and to operate these factories and house and feed and care for the workers. CAL and CAP will maintain a distribution system for the exchange of each other's products. The industries will include laundries, bakeries, canneries, clothing and shoe factories, cement-plants, brick-yards, lumber-yards, thus constituting a complete industrial system, a new and self-sustaining world for those our present system cannot employ."

By "access to the factories", does Sinclair mean what the Communists propose—that the workers and farmers of this country should take power as the government and should take over the great industries, the machinery of production and distribution, to operate these for the benefit of all the toilers?

Oh, no! He attempts to fool the jobless workers by turning over to them some of the broken-down, discarded and junked machinery in old, abandoned shops. Here is what he says (in *Immediate EPIC*, page 9):

> "Of the 10,121 factories in California, more than 1,600 are wholly out of use. Some of these have been *dismantled and are out of repair*. The owners are holding their property with difficulty, many being in arrears with their taxes. If the State should make an offer to rent *these* factories, giving certificates receivable for taxes, the owners would jump at the chance." (My emphasis.)

In the same pamphlet (page 11), he says of the workers:

> "All they ask is the use of the idle factories, *with any old machinery they can find.*" (My emphasis.)

He makes clear that it is only the broken down rubbish that he intends to turn over to the workers. He says he thinks this junk can be "reconditioned and started up". But not for any serious production for which they could get money. Only such stuff as they could "*barter*" off to the other unemployed workers he would send to

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the tent colonies. They would be forbidden by law, he says, to sell anything for money—*a kind of slavery new to America!*

Just what desperate misery he intends these workers and their families to endure in the discarded factories is shown in *Immediate EPIC* (page 9) in Sinclair's own words describing a "self-help" group in Pomona, which he says is an example of how he thinks the unemployed should get along without unemployment relief payments. He says:

> "In an old garage they had set up half a dozen rickety oil stoves, each with a wash-boiler on top. With this primitive equipment they had stacked up half the garage with crates of canned peaches and tomatoes. When I offered to buy some of these goods, I was told that they were not permitted to be sold. It was fruit that otherwise would have rotted on the ground, and had been gathered on the agreement that it would not go on the market."

And he continues:

> "In South Los Angeles I visited a cooperative bakery. The machinery was old and out of repair, but the workers had fixed it up and were turning out several thousand loaves of bread per day. They were exchanging this bread for vegetables grown by another group on a tract of land outside the city."

The sinking of the standard of living to the garbage-pail level which he intends by the removal of all payments of relief, which he tells "the heads of our great corporations" "*will save you, as taxpayers, an outlay of* $66,000,000 *every year*", is shown on page 10 of *Immediate EPIC*:

> "Consider the achievement of the co-operative at Compton, which during the first seven months of this year has served 19,745 meals at a total money cost of less than *half a cent a meal.* Consider that the co-operatives of Los Angeles County, from August to December of 1932, maintained a hundred and fifty thousand members on a cash expenditure by the government of *seventeen cents per family per month.* Since a 'family' is found to average 3.6 persons, this works out at *less than one-sixth of a cent per person per day.* Consider what that would have meant to the overburdened taxpayers of California, who last year paid in one form or another forty-five cents per person for the same service, about two hundred and seventy times as much. You would have expected the taxpayers to hail the achievement of these co-operatives with loud cheers; but instead, the co-operatives have been crippled by every possible device."

Sinclair tries, in this statement, to make the distinction of "*money* cost", to leave the impression that in actual food they would do well. But by this very pretense he exposes all the more the frightful degradation into which he would throw the California workers by com-

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pelling them to live and labor *without the use of money*, and prohibited even to sell anything they made for money. In the same pamphlet (page 14) Sinclair, after describing how he would relieve the "overburdened landlord", says:

> "At the same time our factory workers will be receiving *certificates of service rendered*, which they can take to the store just across the street from the factory, and there obtain at cost prices the products of all factories and farms." (My emphasis.)

On the next page he says:

> "There would be no need to make these receipts or certificates legal tender."

But the "wooden money" would be given only to the duped working class. To "the Heads of our great Corporations" he promises hard cash in the coin of the realm, to the extent of $200,000,000 per year to be "withdrawn" from payment to the unemployed.

With almost incredible nerve Sinclair comes to a climax in his plea to "those who now control industry and finance in California" by saying:

> "In discussing the EPIC Plan, I have described it as 'a loan to end loans'; but you see that, in the earlier stages at any rate, it may better be described as *'relief from relief'*."

Now look at Sinclair's Point Three:

> "3. A public body entitled the California Authority for Money (the CAM) will handle the financing of CAL and CAP. This body will issue scrip to be paid to the workers and used in the exchanging of products within the system. It will also issue bonds to cover the purchase of land and factories, the erection of buildings and the purchase of machinery."

The meaning of this is obtained only with Sinclair's repeated explanation that *the "scrip" is not to be made legal tender*, that it is to have no validity as money or in any way except to facilitate the *barter* of products *between the unemployed within the "self-sustaining world"* of the unemployed, who are simultaneously to be *deprived of* $200,000,000 *per year* which otherwise would be paid to them as unemployment relief, which will thereafter be expended in payments to bankers to liquidate worthless mortgages, or to be saved (as Sinclair says) to the "propertied classes" in reduced taxation!

These first three points of the twelve-point EPIC Plan are in fact the *whole* reality of the EPIC Plan. But if we glance quickly over the other points, we will get a picture of the sheath in which the anti-labor and anti-farmer program is enclosed. This sheath is

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a sheath of demagogy, for practically the whole of this section of "EPIC" (consisting of six points) was discarded openly or tacitly after Sinclair secured the nomination.

Five of these points, Points 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, all deal with taxation, and if really fought for on the basis of class against class, would be anything but demagogic. All of these are copied *practically verbatim from the Communist Party election platforms* of the past several years, including the last New York City campaign. That they meant, in Sinclair's mouth, nothing but demagogy is shown by the complete abandonment of them as soon as he secured the nomination and had gone into conference with Roosevelt and McAdoo, and—by the ludicrous fact that he appealed to "those who now control industry and finance in California" to put over the forced labor and junk factory "penal colonies" on the ground that he would "save" them $200,000,000 yearly, and that he would "save" them from the Communists by dispersing the unemployed in far-away places, while he at the same time dropped all mention of these Communist-made taxation measures!

(Point 9 of the "EPIC Plan" is also a taxation measure; it is borrowed, not from the Communists, but from the Single Taxers. It called for increased taxation upon unimproved land. Sinclair became silent about it after seeing the heads of the Democratic Party.)

* * *

Points 10, 11, and 12 called for, respectively, *old age pension, pension for the blind,* and *pension for widows with dependents.* These demands, as originally made (the age pension measure was repudiated by Sinclair later), can be understood in their practical political significance only if we regard them as *fragments* of a *general* system of Social Insurance which was and is widely popularized in California as well as the whole country, which has secured a tremendous mass support with the endorsement of 2,400 trade unions of the A. F. of L., some 30 city councils, etc. I refer to the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill (H.R. 7598), which includes all three of the foregoing pension provisions, but *together with* all other forms of Social Insurance, such as unemployment, part-time, sickness, accident, disability, motherhood, etc. And so Sinclair's "pension" proposals must be judged not solely from the point of view of what they *call for,* but also and most importantly *what they eliminate from the list of demands of an already wide mass movement for Social Insurance.*

Of course, the central demand within the purview of Social Insurance, towering above all other demands at the present time, is the demand for unemployment relief in immediate cash payments

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to the unemployed and in the form of a federal system of Unemployment Insurance by the U. S. government to be applied immediately in the form of regular cash replacement of wages to the present 18,000,000 unemployed, and to all future unemployed. There are only a few thousand blind persons, and relatively not many more thousands of widows with dependents, but there are 18,000,000 unemployed—so the colossal stake involved in Unemployment Insurance overshadows everything else as a struggle issue.

But Sinclair's whole "EPIC Plan" is directed precisely *against any payments of any sort to the unemployed;* the essence of his plan is to "*take the unemployed off the taxpayers' backs*" by completely shutting off every cent of payments to the unemployed.

Therefore it is clear that, in picking out three of the less heavy demands of social insurance (pensions for the aged, for the blind and for widows with dependents), Sinclair was singling these out *only to aid his main struggle against unemployment insurance* which involves billions of dollars where the others involve relatively small sums.

And, before we drop the subject, I must point out that the heaviest of the three demands that Sinclair *did* make—that for old age pensions—was repudiated by him openly and specifically in his "Final Statement of the Plan", when he said:

> "The opponents of our Plan point out that there are 560,000 persons in the State over sixty years of age, and they tell us that 90 per cent of these are dependent. . . ."

So he points out that this would mean that his original "Point 10" would cost "$200,000,000 per year" and that "the people of California cannot afford that, because they have to pay $400,000,000 per year in interest to the parasites of Wall Street". He refers this, then, to the responsibility of the Federal government and drops his own promise of State old age pensions, with the words:

> "It seems sensible, therefore, to put off this problem until we see what the President does."

* * *

It is clear now that, aside from the two minor points of blindness and widowhood pensions, absolutely nothing remained of Sinclair's "EPIC Plan to End Poverty in California" except the stark and ghastly picture of the forced labor camps, junked factories and foreclosed mortgages. The "steeply graduated" income and inheritance taxes, the latter running up to "50 per cent of sums above $250,000" had simmered down to "just and moderate increase in bank and inheritance taxes", and "No increase on real estate". The

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exemption from taxation of homes assessed at less than $3,000 had slipped down to $1,000 exemption; while Sinclair had covered up a little on the foreclosure plan with a vague reference to "State aid to return to original owners the homes and farms that have been lost by foreclosure, the State to accept a first lien for delinquent taxes, . . ." etc. The demand against the sales tax continued to appear obscurely.

All else was forgotten. But there were some "Labor" demands repeated from McAdoo's Democratic platform: "Strengthening collective bargaining" (meaning what?), and "The six-hour day and five-day week without a *corresponding* reduction of wages" (meaning a *reduction* in wages, but not one "corresponding" to the reduction in hours—the stagger system).

Sinclair's proposals are the most reactionary that have been made by any politician during the economic crisis.

His proposal to put the unemployed in tent colonies in semi-savagery without money, trying to live by digging what they can out of the earth, is *not* socialistic, but is almost an exact copy of the most cold-blooded brutality attempted upon the unemployed workers of Germany.

His proposal to stop all unemployment relief payments and put the unemployed into abandoned factories, is *not* a start toward socialization of industry, it is the *socialization of the junk-pile.*

This whole reactionary scheme would not be "undermining private industry" (as Sinclair says!), but undermining the health, the strength, the very lives of the working people of California, undermining their most elementary civil rights and gutting the labor movement.

IV. THE "THEORY" OF SINCLAIRISM

Sinclair proposes to bring about the *most reactionary alliance conceivable in the present times*—an alliance of a farmers' mass movement with the city bourgeoisie *against the expenditure of money in relief of the unemployed workers.* Speaking of his proposed forced-labor pauper colonies as "state production", Sinclair wrote (*Liberty Magazine,* October 20, 1934):

> "The farmers at the outset were afraid of the idea of state production. But it has been made clear to them that they are in the same position as the business men in this crisis. They are furnishing the food to feed the unemployed. The money they are getting back is in effect a state subsidy, every dollar of it is added to the public debt, and in the end it will be taken out of the farmers' pockets in the form of higher taxes."

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And:

> "To the business men the EPIC Plan says: These unemployed men and women are no longer of any use to you. The money they are now spending in your stores is in reality your own money; the state borrows it from you and gives it to the starving, who pay it back to you in the form of profits on purchases. But you are fooling yourselves with these profits, for the public debt is being increased by that same amount, and in the end you or your children will have to pay it in the form of taxes.
>
> "So we say: Give us these unemployed persons and let us put them at work producing for themselves. That will take them off your backs, and you can go on making profits out of those who still have money to pay you."

"Why has not every taxpayer demanded that the destitute shall no longer be fed out of the tax funds", Sinclair asks (in his book *I, Governor of California*), "but shall be set to work raising their own food and making their shoes and clothing and shelter?"

And Sinclair answers his own question with a theory that would have interested a Hitler or a Goebbels in the days when they were yet struggling to secure a mass base for Thyssen by "anti-capitalist" agitation. The theory is that *not* the Communists at the head of the Unemployment Councils are compelling the payment of unemployment relief, but that the *capitalists* are compelling the payment of unemployment relief—*against* the interests of the workers and the "taxpayers". According to Sinclair unemployment relief payment is a conspiracy of "the profit-takers", and "private industry" and "the great feudal wheat ranches"! Sinclair says (in *I, Governor of California*, p. 13):

> "The answer is obvious. It is not the taxpayers who govern the State of California; it is the profit-takers, represented by the heads of great corporations and banks. When the State buys goods for the unemployed, it buys them from the private manufacturers, and that means profits. When the State gives money to the unemployed, the unemployed spend it in the channels of our profit system, and again we are subsidizing private industry. If the unemployed were to raise their own wheat, it would reduce the profits of the great feudal wheat-ranches of our State. If they ground their own grain, it would interfere with the profits of the milling-trust. If they baked their own bread, it would cut the profits of the baking trust—and all these operations would hurt the bankers who have the bonds of these corporations in their vaults. We are held tight in the grip of a system, which decrees that a million of our citizens shall suffer slow starvation, rather than let the strangle-hold of Big Business slip."

So the theory is quite clear: In order to break "the strangle-hold of Big Business" we are to shut off all payments to the un-

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employed. ("The philosophy of fascism must be created," said Mussolini.) But the political servants of the "great corporations" have denounced Mr. Sinclair, he says, as "Public Enemy Number One" for wanting to stop all unemployment payments, which *they* wish to continue paying! Says Sinclair (*Immediate EPIC*, p. 10):

> "The survival of the politicians depends upon this relief, and the man who proposes to cut it off becomes Public Enemy Number One. That is why you see Republican candidates collecting campaign funds from special interests and spending the money for radio time to denounce Upton Sinclair as an atheist and agent of Moscow."

But to precisely "the heads of great corporations and banks" the same Sinclair openly bids to be hired as their agent in the fight against social expenditures and against "Bolshevism". In his *I, Governor . . .*" he writes:

> "If our propertied classes were wise they would take EPIC as the alternative to Communism. If EPIC fails, the Communists will do the job." (p. 33).
>
> "If the EPIC Plan were defeated, the only outcome would be a violent revolution, in which the propertied classes would lose far more than they stood to lose under EPIC." (p. 30).

In his pamphlet *Immediate EPIC* Sinclair even more openly bids to be used by exactly those who organize the vigilante terror and strike-breaking violence against the workers:

> "We have to begin somewhere, so I assume that which I hope for—intelligent and public-spirited cooperation on the part of those who now control industry and finance in California." (p. 5).

And as a businessman to businessmen he gets down to cash figures:

> ". . . if you will give us a chance to get the unemployed started at production for their own use, we will save you, as taxpayers, a cash outlay of $66,000,000 every year, plus the $75,000,000 or $80,000,000 which the Federal government has advanced, and on which you, as taxpayers, are already paying interest. Gentlemen executives, these are the facts, and if you are capable of thinking a year ahead, you will come forward and help us do this job for our Golden State." (p. 23).
>
> "We have already explained how we propose to take the unemployed off the backs of the taxpayers and make them self-supporting, so that our $200,000,000 burden will be quickly lifted." (p. 20).

Why was it necessary for Sinclair to invent these wildly insane "theories" if his real platform is to get the unemployed "off the

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backs" of the "propertied classes" and into starvation camps at "self-sustaining" forced labor, to break up the workers' fighting organizations, defeat the Communists, and to organize an agrarian movement against the city workers—in short the same program that Merriam, Chandler, and Fleischhacker are already trying (but unsuccessfully) to accomplish with the direct force of the police and extra-legal "Vigilante" violence?

We might let a famous German writer answer that for us—or rather, for Sinclair, who, we remember, has set out to combat the theory of Bolshevism:

> "Every attempt to combat a world-theory by means of force comes to grief in the end, so long as the struggle fails to take the form of aggression in favor of a new intellectual conception. It is only when two world-theories are wrestling on equal terms that brute force, persistent and ruthless, can bring about a decision by arms in favor of the side which it supports.
>
> "It was on this side that the fight against Marxism had failed up to that time. It was the reason why Bismarck's legislation regarding Socialism failed in the end in spite of everything, and was bound to fail. It lacked the platform of a new world-theory to establish which the fight might have been fought; for only the proverbial wisdom of high State officials could find it possible to imagine that the twaddle about so-called 'State authority' or 'order and tranquility' are a sufficient inducement to fight to the death.
>
> "In 1914 a contest against Social-Democracy was in fact conceivable, but the lack of any practical substitute made it doubtful how long such a contest could have been maintained successfully. In that respect there was a serious blank." (Adolph Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*.)

Much is made of the fact that Sinclair spent a life-time as a "liberal" (at the same time a "socialist"), as a pacifist, in polemics against everything that the vigilantes and fascists today stand for. Sinclair would have it believed that he thunders, not against Bolshevism alone, but against "Fascism, Nazism and Bolshevism". But everybody remembers Dollfuss' "struggle" against fascism (Nazism) in Austria. Sinclair's "anti-fascist" words are but a smoke-screen for his fascist program. When the fascist Vigilante bands under police guidance made their illegal raids against the Communists during the general strike, breaking up buildings and assaulting workers—Mr. Sinclair chose that as the best moment to launch wildly provocative attacks upon the Communists. Even Norman Thomas detected and commented in the *New Leader* (August 25) on the rising tide of fascist violence in California:

> "Apparently our old friend Upton Sinclair is singing soft and low about it."

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V. FASCISM AN INSTRUMENT OF FINANCE CAPITAL

The Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. described fascism in this way:

> *"Fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital.* Fascism tries to secure a mass basis for monopolist capital among the petty bourgeoisie, appealing to the peasantry, artisans, office employees and civil servants who have been thrown out of their normal course of life, and particularly to the declassed elements in the big cities, also trying to penetrate into the working class."

The "most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital" did *not* support Upton Sinclair; but on the contrary fought him and defeated him, electing by the use of their control of the press, the pulpit, the schools, the police, the radio, Sinclair's opponent Merriam. At the last meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party U.S.A., Comrade Browder read an extract from a dispatch of a press correspondent, telegraphed from President Roosevelt's home at Hyde Park, N. Y., on the day after Sinclair secured the Democratic Party nomination, which might indicate that there was *hesitation* on the part of some of the most powerful ruling class elements as to whether to support Sinclair. The dispatch said:

> "After viewing the dimensions of Mr. Sinclair's victory in the primary, there is no disposition in official quarters here to put him down as a defeated candidate in the November election. At the same time, there is no disposition to deny that his nomination presents political problems of the greatest complexity.
>
> "Since he was duly and overwhelmingly nominated as a Democrat and since he has sworn fealty to the New Deal, his support by Mr. Farley and the national organization will follow as a matter of course.
>
> "But the effectiveness of the support depends, of course, primarily on Senator William Gibbs McAdoo, leader of the largest wing of the regular party, and on his lieutenants, including George Creel, defeated by Mr. Sinclair; on the remnants of the group led by Justus Wardell, another of the defeated candidates for the gubernatorial nomination; on Senator Hiram W. Johnson and probably, to some extent, on William Randolph Hearst.
>
> "Mr. Sinclair's program is somewhat more radical than the New Deal in some respects. On the other hand, the Republican nominee is too far to the right to have any common ground with the New Deal. Wholly apart from party considerations, Mr. Sinclair probably would be viewed as much nearer the New Deal than Governor Merriam. The next few weeks probably will see a great dal of 'sounding out' in California political circles, with active, but concealed, participation from Washington and Hyde Park.
>
> "Prior to the primary yesterday Mr. Roosevelt, it is known, re-

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ceived communications from prominent California Democrats which took Mr. Sinclair's nomination for granted and urged that the national administration be prepared to get behind him. The tenor of this advice was that Mr. Sinclair should be surrounded with practical New Dealers who could keep him from going too far and too fast. It was pointed out that he was bringing into the Democratic Party a great many thousands of votes which otherwise would go to a more radical candidate outside of both major parties.

"According to this analysis of the California political situation which was circulated several days ago among important members of the administration, Mr. Sinclair is a powerful deterrent to the breaking away of large blocs of votes, especially among the unemployed, into the arms of Communism.

"The argument presented in this analysis was that nobody more conservative than Mr. Sinclair could prevent many thousands of workers and unemployed from moving much further to the left and seeking their objectives by direct action under Communist leadership rather than by Democratic progress. The national administration, accordingly, was warned that Mr. Sinclair would easily win the primary and urged to throw all of its forces behind him in the election with a view to trying to forestall a long period of violent social unrest under conservative government of the state.

"In this analysis a rough analogy was drawn between Mr. Roosevelt's position in 1932 and Mr. Sinclair's present status in California. It was pointed out that Mr. Roosevelt's nomination by the Democrats, in the face of opposition from the conservative East, and his election were a great relief to local tension which otherwise might have manifested itself in a rather unpleasant manner."

This dispatch appeared in a Republican newspaper, but there is reason to believe that it is a close paraphrase of an actual report from Roosevelt's Democratic machine representatives in California. It does seem to suggest that the final double-crossing of Sinclair and the scuttling of his proposal came only after hesitation high in the circles of "the most reactionary, the most chauvinist, the most imperialist elements of finance capital".

* * *

The organizational break with the party of social-fascism, the announcement of a rejection of the Socialist Party's program, the adoption of a program of direct assault against the social expenditures of the State in the name of "saving the State from bankruptcy," the covering of this anti-social program with a "new" crack-pot "ideology" of demagogy, the opening of a *demagogic* war against Communism and the bid for acceptance by the biggest financial interests as the champion to "save" the State—not any of this, nor all of this can constitute a "going concern" of fascism without the direct intervention and taking over of the ex-socialist demagogue

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by "the most reactionary, the most chauvinist, the most imperialist elements of finance capital".

There has not been and cannot be any case of the establishment of a fascist dictatorship except by such finance capital; and it has not found necessary the use of Sinclair, but has decisively rejected him for the time being.

Why did the ruling class reject Sinclair?

Perhaps the *Los Angeles Times* made the clearest as well as the most authoritative explanation as to why the bourgeoisie fears to accept the services of Sinclair "as the alternative to Communism". It feared the three-quarters of a million men and women *behind* Sinclair; feared that he could never control them; feared that his demagogic program would set foot upon a road from which no power could turn back that mass. On the Sunday before election, although the oil-grafters' lawyer McAdoo, boss of the Democratic Party, on that day announced his final decision to support Sinclair, the *Los Angeles Times* printed a front-page editorial saying:

> "If California turns to the left upon the red-flagged road of Communism, such impetus and encouragement will be given the rising tide of radicalism in America as may make it impossible to check. . . .
>
> "Whatever his intent, the rule of Sinclair would speedily degenerate to Red-directed mob rule."

The *Times* was looking not so much at Sinclair's promises to break up the unemployed organizations and stop all relief payments, as at the grim faces of men in overalls who had already begun to have physical clashes with Merriam supporters at the door of the Republican headquarters.

(*To be continued.*)

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Recent Developments in the Steel Industry and Our Tasks

By JOHN STEUBEN

THE recent decisions of the Central Committee in regard to our trade union tactics in the steel industry are of utmost importance to the Communists in the steel centers. The decision of the CC. *to throw the entire weight of our activities inside and through the A. F. of L. union in the steel industry* is absolutely correct and is based on a Leninist estimation of the situation in the steel industry and in the labor movement as a whole.

In the November issue of *The Communist* Comrade Stachel has already analyzed the various political factors at work that necessitated such a change in coal, textile, auto and steel industries. The purpose of this article is to analyze the recent developments, as well as to outline our practical tasks based on the decisions of the C.C.

* * *

The emergency convention of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers under the direct leadership of William Green and Mike Tighe, succeeded without any serious difficulties in the calling off of the Steel Strike. This was possible because the Committee of Ten, elected at the regular convention to prepare for a strike, had failed to take the most elementary steps in preparation for the strike. This first of all would have meant an organization drive throughout the steel industry that in its aspects and vitality would equal the one carried on in 1919 under the direct leadership of William Z. Foster. The prerequisites for such a drive existed, but the Committee of Ten and the progressive elements around it failed to realize that such a drive can be successful only on the basis of struggle for the economic needs of the steel workers. Instead of the economic demands becoming the rallying point, the question of collective bargaining, thrown out in the most confused manner, became the central slogan.

Another deadly mistake made by the progressive elements inside the A.A. was the belief that Section 7-a of the N.R.A. and President Roosevelt are actually in favor of organizing the American workers into labor unions of their own choosing, although the experiences in auto and other industries should have convinced them

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otherwise. Instead of relying on a mass organization drive, mobilizing and organizing the steel workers for struggle, many of these "progressive" leaders turned to the Labor Board, to Senator Wagner and President Roosevelt, expecting *them* to "convince" the Steel Trust to change its traditional anti-labor and union smashing policies.

During the same time the Steel Trust had developed a most vicious anti-union and anti-strike campaign, using all its forces and resources against the decisions of the first A.A. Convention. It must be stated that because the Amalgamated has failed to actively counteract the Steel Trust propaganda, a large number of steel workers were actually against a strike. This could have been overcome if the union would have carried on a real intensive drive inside the mills.

The question naturally arises, how was it possible for the first Amalgamated Convention to adopt a militant stand on many basic problems facing the steel workers and within a short period of time an emergency convention is called where Green and Tighe were able to defeat and overrule all the decisions made at the first convention?

The answer lies in the fact that during the period of the first and second convention there was no crystallized and organized class conscious opposition, that had a definite class program and plenty of nerve to fight for it. As a matter of fact, the very existence of such a class conscious opposition movement could have exercised sufficient influence and pressure upon many elements in and around the Committee of Ten. On the other hand Mike Tighe, Green & Co. used this period for their organization of the convention against the steel workers.

This is of course a direct weakness of the work of the Party in the steel industry, especially in regard to our work inside the A.A. When this progressive movement developed, it had to be reenforced and eventually led by the most militant elements in the industry. Unfortunately, however, the Left wing forces in the steel industry were organizationally isolated from the A.A., being in the main inside the S.M.W.I.U.

In giving a background to the present situation it is very important to record one more fact, which is of *decisive* importance for our future policies and practical activity in the steel industry. This is the fact that the greatest majority of steel workers are still unorganized and what *we* are concerned with is what role will our party play in the actual organization of the steel workers and which are the organizational forms through which it can be best accomplished. This question assumes even greater importance since the recent deci-

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sion of the A. F. of L. Convention to begin an organization drive in the steel industry.

With the above background in mind we shall proceed to analyze the latest developments among the steel workers, especially the organized section of the steel industry:

1. As one of the means to discourage the workers from coming out on strike the Steel Trust issued daily statements that they had many orders and that if the workers would not come out on strike there would be plenty of work for every steel worker. The Steel Trust propaganda actually stated: "Many of you men have been out of work for over two years; now that you have a chance to make money, the union wants you to strike." This was a powerful weapon in the hands of the Steel Trust. Many workers actually believed that the worst was over and that if there would be no strike, lots of work was ahead of them.

However, as soon as the strike was called off, a tremendous drop in production took place in the month of July. The press promised a pickup in September and in September a new promise was made for November, but as this is written there is no indication of a decisive change.

Thus the promise of work which was so attractive to the average steel worker and his family turned out to be a big fake. The lack of work still further strengthened the already accumulated discontent among the broad masses of steel workers.

2. When the strike was called off and the differences turned over to the Steel Labor Board, the top officials of the Amalgamated, including the majority of the Committee of Ten, helped to spread the illusion that the workers will get a fair break, that the Steel Labor Board is really an impartial body. The eyes of the steel workers turned on Washington, carefully watching what the Labor Board would do.

Four months went by and not one step was taken by this Board, with the Weirton case standing out as a living example of what these Boards really mean. This greatly shattered the illusions about the N.R.A. and the Labor Board. This is another important factor that adds to the discontent of the steel workers.

3. It is now very plain that a new wage cut is being contemplated. As this is written the president of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube announced that a wage cut is inevitable. Most probably it will come into effect after the elections. A wage cut at a time when most of the "employed" steel workers don't make more than two or three days a pay, will considerably worsen the already critical economic position of the steel workers. This is a decisive contribut-

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ing factor that may within the shortest period of time create a strike situation in the steel industry.

The failure of the Steel Trust to provide work, the failure of the Steel Labor Board to do anything for the steel workers, the increasing danger of a new wage cut are important factors that breed discontent and will soon again stir up a strike situation.

Because of the failure of the Amalgamated leadership to carry on a struggle in defense of its members, the A.A. suffered a tremendous organizational setback.

It is interesting for us to know that in those lodges that carry on any kind of activity in defense of their members, the attendance at meetings and payment of dues are much larger, and in some cases the lodges are even growing.

There is also a tendency among the unorganized workers to overestimate the power of the trusts. It is expressed in the idea that the Steel Trust is so almighty and powerful that the workers will never get recognition. It can all be expressed in a "what's the use" attitude.

These negative features in the present situation are a direct outcome of the ruinous policies of the A.A. officialdom. However, in this situation there are some positive features that are of such great importance that they can not only overcome and eliminate the above weaknesses, but actually become the beginning of a broad and militant movement in the steel industry. The most important of these developments are as follows:

A realignment of forces is now taking place inside the Amalgamated Association. The progressive elements in and around the Committee of Ten are on cross roads. Some are fast moving to the Right and completely identifying themselves with the policies of Mike Tighe (Forback, Long, etc.); still others go to the Left.

There is an honest and growing desire on the part of the majority of A.A. members and many local officials, who are also mill workers, to do something. They realize that either something is to be done or the very existence of the organization is in danger. However, because these rank and file leaders lack a class approach they are unable by themselves to work out a militant program and actually develop a movement around such a program. Of course, the illusions of the past still linger in their minds. A class conscious opposition can crystallize all these desires and moods for militant action.

At a recent meeting of the 6th District of the A.A. a resolution was adopted that unless the Steel Labor Board begins to actually do something, they will resort to a strike. One can also hear increasing talk about a "new union". Another indication of the growing mili-

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tancy is the support given by the A.A. lodges to the League Against War and Fascism. This growing militancy is fast becoming more conscious and assumes concreteness. In this respect the decisions of the last meeting of the 6th District are indeed of great importance. They openly challenged the decision of the recent A. F. of L. Convention in regard to the organization drive in the steel industry. The resolution of the 6th District states:

> "Whereas the 54th Convention of the American Federation of Labor just held in San Francisco went on record for an organization campaign by the A. F. of L. in the steel industry, and whereas there are none who know better the conditions, problems, mills and men as the 6th District Organization Committee itself, and whereas we have among our own ranks good men who are well qualified to do this organizing work if provided with the necessary finances; therefore be it resolved that the 6th District Organization Committee at its meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, October 21, calls upon the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. to begin at once to carry out this decision of their Convention by providing us with funds for maintaining a crew of ten organizers in this district, and be it further resolved that these organizers shall be selected by the 6th District Organization Committee and work under the direction of same."

A similar movement is developing in other districts.

Another most interesting new feature is the growing friendliness towards our Party on the part of many A.A. members and local leaders; a beginning of the realization of the strength of our Party and the great help we can be in the struggle against the Steel Trust. I purposely say "great help", because it would be an exaggeration to say that these elements already recognize the Party as their leader. In reporting at a district meeting of the A.A. on the Chicago Anti-War Congress, one of the local leaders of the A.A. had the following to say: "If Republicans, Democrats and Socialists can unite with the Communists for a common struggle against war and fascism, why can't we unite with the Communists against the Steel Trust?" When the Green letter was read at the lodge meetings, in many of them it was tabled; some of the lodges even went so far as to reply to Green, stating that instead of fighting the Reds he would do better if he would help to organize the steel workers against the Steel Trust. The Non-Partisan Committee of one of the A.A. lodges in Canton brought in a decision favoring the State Communist ticket in the congressional elections. These and numerous other examples establish the fact that a Leftward-going movement is rapidly developing inside the Amalgamated.

From our present tactic in the steel industry as outlined in the last issue of *The Communist*, a series of practical tasks follow. As a

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matter of fact the very success of our tactic depends entirely on our ability to carry out the decisions in practice. Comrade Stachel in the November issue of *The Communist* correctly points out:

> "We have some forces and strength much larger than our organizations would indicate. Through our language press and mass organizations, we have a tremendous influence, but we have not yet won the key strata. If we were to throw our forces into the A.A. organization, they together with those within the A.A. who now follow us, and those we shall win to our side, would serve as a source of great strength."

The task now is to *build this strength.* Concretely these are our immediate tasks:

1. To convince the Communist steel workers of the correctness of the C.C. decision. To enable the Communists inside the steel mills to become an active factor in recruiting new steel workers inside the A.A., especially from among the unskilled and semi-skilled sections of the workers. These will become our main strength.

2. In many steel towns the fraternal organizations under our leadership are *mass* organizations with a total membership that rolls up into thousands. What a powerful force this can be if we succeed in recruiting these workers into the A.A.

3. A very decisive task is to win key positions inside the Amalgamated lodges and districts. The Communists through their practical work must win the confidence of the A.A. membership and thus be elected into the key positions of the union, as well as be defended by the membership should the top officials attempt to expel Communists from the union.

4. In those steel mills and towns where no A.A. lodges exist at present it is the Communists that must become the initiators for forming such lodges. These newly organized lodges must of course not be composed of merely small groups of already class conscious workers. These must be initiators for forming *mass* lodges in each mill.

5. An exceptionally important task that faces us immediately is the formation of *broad rank and file groups inside every lodge.* Without such *organized* groups it will be difficult to defeat the policies and leadership of Tighe and his henchmen. In the present district and lodge elections we see that in those lodges where rank and file groups function the rank and file slates in most cases are elected.

6. The formation of the groups, however, is only half of the job. These groups must be led by Communists and class conscious workers. This is the only guarantee that the growing rank and file movement inside the A.A. will develop along militant lines, with a clear-cut class conscious program. This not only means the activizing

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of our present Party membership inside the steel mills, but also the recruiting of hundreds of A.A. members into the ranks of the Party and systematically training these workers to assume leadership. *Functioning Communist nuclei inside the steel mills becomes today one of the most important tasks of the district and section leadership in the steel areas.*

7. The question of concentration on certain key steel mills in each district and section must remain as our basic method of work. Now when we are coming in contact with, and establishing a working relationship with many A.A. members and local leaders, if we work right, we are in a position to utilize these new forces for our policy of concentration.

8. We are only a few months from the convention of the A.A. The question of each lodge electing rank and file delegates is indeed a very decisive question. With this growing revolt of the rank and file against the Tighe leadership it becomes possible to have a majority of rank and file delegates at the coming convention of the A.A. This of course means a tremendous amount of work in which the Communists must take an active part.

9. The number of Negro steel workers inside the A.A. is very insignificant. It is now our duty to attract the Negro steel workers into the A.A., at the same time to carry on an uncompromising struggle against all tendencies of Jim-Crowism and discrimination inside the A.A. and overcome all other obstacles in the way of Negro workers coming into the A.A.

10. Finally, the role of our press, especially the language press that has a mass circulation in the steel towns, must devote a whole lot more attention and space to the conditions and struggles of the steel workers.

With our present trade union tactic in the steel industry, with the growing influence of our Party among the steel workers, plus the rising discontent of the broad masses of steel workers, it becomes possible for us to develop a movement that will be of great political significance to the entire labor movement in the United States.

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Sharecropping as a Remnant of Chattel Slavery

By JAMES S. ALLEN

(*Chapter from a Work in Progress*)

SHARECROPPING is that specific economic slave survival which lies at the basis of the oppression of the Negro people, and is the most important single factor which marks the non-completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Before establishing the extent of this economic slave hangover today and its relation to capitalist development in the South, it is first necessary more firmly to establish its nature.

American bourgeois economists are practically unanimous in defining sharecropping as wage labor, even of a higher form than labor paid in cash wages and differing from the latter only in that it is paid in kind. The stages in development from a lower to a higher plane of farm labor are envisaged by them somewhat as follows: first comes wage labor, then sharecropping, which is the first rung in the tenant ladder. Then, via the other forms of tenancy, the worker may graduate into the class of landowners. One writer, for instance, declares:

> "The share tenant is in reality a day laborer. Instead of receiving weekly or monthly wages he is paid a share of the crop raised on the tract of land for which he is responsible." (Robert P. Brooks, *The Agrarian Revolution in Georgia*, 1865-1912, pp. 65-66.)

The legal codes of some of the cotton States classify the cropper as a "wage laborer working for the share of the crop as wages". The Georgia Supreme Court in 1872 decided that, "The case of the cropper is rather a mode of paying wages than a tenancy" and has remained by this decision since. A later decision revealed the motivation behind this classification:

> "Where an owner of land furnishes it with supplies and other like necessaries, keeping general supervision over the farm, and agrees to pay a certain portion of the crop to the laborer for his work, the laborer is a cropper and *judgments or liens cannot sell his part of the crop until the landlord is fully paid. . . .*" (*Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.)

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The sum total of this decision was that, as a wage-laborer being paid in kind, the cropper has no title to the crop, upon which the landlord has first call. On the other hand, the same objective is obtained in those States where the cropper is legally considered a tenant. Here, "where the landlord desires to avoid statutory requirements, he may obtain full title by written agreement. In such cases the cropper loses his legal status as a tenant." (C. O. Brannen, *Relation of Land Tenure to Plantation Organization*, U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin No.* 1269, p. 31.)

C. O. Brannen, agricultural economist of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, holds that the cropper occupies an intermediary position between the wage-worker and the farm tenant, between which positions he may be shifted, depending upon the state of the labor market, the planters sometimes being "obliged to raise their wage hands to the cropper status"! According to this writer, "the consistent increase of tenancy in the South since the Civil War indicates an improvement in the status of farm labor". (*Ibid.*, pp. 22-23; 32-33.)

Neither historically nor from the point of view of their economic content is this comparison between the various forms of labor and tenancy correct. Historically speaking, it is true that wage-labor, in a greatly modified form, was probably prevalent on the Southern plantations in the first two years immediately following the Civil War. But this was an expression of the revolutionary situation which existed in the South at that time, and came much closer to a solution of the bourgeois-democratic tasks than did the system of sharecropping. Wage-labor, even as practiced during those years, was a much "freer" form of labor than the first forms of sharecropping. Sharecropping and related forms fulfilled the function of assuring labor the year through, and even longer, to the planter, of binding it to the plantation. And sharecropping continues to serve this function to the present day. Both Brooks and Brannen are forced to admit this, despite their smooth and utopian picture of the ladder of progress. "The wage hand was an uncertain factor in that he was liable to disappear on any payday," declares Brooks, in discussing the reasons for the prevalence of sharecropping. "The cropper is obliged to stay at least during an entire year, or forfeit his profits." (Brooks, *op. cit.*, p. 66.) In fact, within the limits of the sharecropping arrangement, the planter often, when plowing, planting, cultivating or picking demand it, quite forgets the individual business deal he is supposed to have entered upon with his croppers: he will work them in gangs, plowing or carrying out other operations over the whole plantation at one time, regardless of the "individual holdings".

In remarking upon an increase of tenancy, especially cropping,

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during the World War and after, when large numbers of Negroes migrated out of the Black Belt, Brannen says:

> ". . . Considerable numbers of planters, both of cotton and sugar cane, have shifted in part during the World War from the wage to the tenant system. Under present conditions (in 1920) some of these will probably return to the wage system, *provided the labor supply becomes normal.* . . . When a scarcity of labor has occurred planters have been obliged to raise [!] their wage hands to the cropper status *or lose the labor and allow croppers to become renters.*" (Our italics. Brannen, *op. cit.*, p. 22.)

A constant supply of labor is a prerequisite for capitalist relations of production and under capitalism it is a "normal" condition that there should always be at hand a large reserve labor army, or that such an army should be constantly in the process of becoming by the expropriation of the tillers of the soil or, as in the United States, that a constant labor supply migrate from regions where such expropriations are taking place. Only when there was a relative abundance of labor power at hand, which was not being depleted by industrial development, could wage labor be safely employed on the Southern plantations. But as soon as this supply was beginning to vanish, as happened during the World War, the immediate effect was greater utilization of sharecropping, *i.e.*, of binding the laborer to the soil more firmly. As Brannen himself so aptly puts it: "From the landlord's point of view, the use of cropper rather than wage labor may be a means of stabilizing the labor supply." (*Ibid.*, p. 32.) Speaking of the relative merits of the employment of day laborers, the same author states that while the planter has the advantage of not having to support them when their labor is not needed, "it [wage-labor] has the disadvantage of compelling the plantation operator to engage in costly competition for labor when labor is scarce". (*Ibid.*, p. 26.) Who does not know that under competitive conditions and with a restricted labor market, the worker will get higher returns for his labor power? Both from the point of view of better conditions for the worker and from the point of view of its social nature, wage labor is a higher form of labor than sharecropping and reflects in those regions where it is predominant the existence of a higher and more progressive stage of social development.*

In reality, sharecropping is neither a higher form of labor than free wage labor, nor does it hold a position between the latter and higher forms of tenancy. The significance of sharecropping lies in the fact that it represents an intermediary stage between *chattel slavery*, on the one hand, and either wage labor or capitalist tenancy on the other. Two courses of development were possible after the Civil War within the limits of the fulfillment of the bourgeois-

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democratic revolution: either the break-up of the estates and the establishment of petty-proprietorship which might then develop into large-scale capitalist farming, a necessary accompaniment of which would be the creation of a large army of wage workers, or, even failing the confiscation of the estates, the immediate utilization of the former slaves as wage-workers on large capitalist farms. But with the failure to carry through the bourgeois-democratic revolution, neither of these possible solutions took place, either one of which would preclude the carrying over of slave forms of labor as the dominant forms. Instead landowners, and, to some degree, capitalist tenants, continued to operate the large estates, which for the most part remained intact, utilizing semi-slave forms of labor.

What is the specific slave content of sharecropping and the forms of tenancy which exist in Southern agriculture? An analysis of the forms of labor and relations of production which prevail in the cotton plantation areas should reveal the very source from which arises the whole superstructure of the oppression of the Negro people. Here is that specific economic factor which reveals the half-way abolition of chattel slavery and from which flows the whole complex of violent and all-pervading persecution, discrimination, jim-crow, "race hatred", white superiority, etc., which surrounds the American Negro.

Among non-landowning tillers of the soil in the South, there are three principal categories, excluding wage-labor. These are the sharecroppers, the share-tenants and the renters. In the case of the sharecropper, *all* the means of production—the land, implements and working stock—are owned by the landowner. The cropper is assigned a portion of land and a cabin. For the use of the means of production the cropper is theoretically supposed to give the landowner half of the crop. Out of the other half of the crop (which is supposed to constitute either his wages in kind, or that portion of the crop left after he has paid his rent in kind) the landowner deducts for all food and other necessities advanced during the season

* As between sharecropping and the various forms of tenancy in the South, the former offers the most profitable field of exploitation for the planter. In "A Study of the Tenant Systems in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta", made by the Department of Agriculture in 1913, it was found that the average yearly income of sharecroppers was $333, of share tenants $398, and of cash renters $478. The profit obtained by the landlord was in inverse proportion: his income from sharecroppers yielded on an average of 13.6 per cent on his investment, in the case of share tenants his return was 11.8 per cent, and in the case of cash renters between 6 per cent and 7 per cent. "It is . . . easy to understand why, in practically all cases where landlords can give personal supervision to their planting operations, they desire to continue the sharecropping system as long as possible," sagely remarks Woofter in his *Negro Migrations*, p. 75.

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as well as for certain costs of cultivation, such as fertilizer. At all times the cropper works under the close supervision of the operator or his agents. He has no control over the nature of the crop, the acreage, methods of cultivation, nor over the marketing of the crop. He has none of that independence, as limited as it is by the dominance of all forms of monopoly, which is enjoyed by the very smallest of farmers or tenants in non-Southern areas. In reality, the settlement at the end of the year amounts to the cropper having received barely enough subsistence from the planter in the form of advances to remain working, with a little cash thrown in very occasionally perhaps at Christmas time during an especially good year. More often, the cropper finds himself still in debt to the planter after the cotton picking and the marketing of the crop and he is forced to remain, under the provisions of the crop lien, until the debt is worked off or another planter agrees to buy the debt and with it the peon. Legalization of this state of affairs is to be found in the vagrancy statutes, emigrant agency laws and laws penalizing tenant farmers, croppers or wage-workers for failure to complete cultivation of the crop after once having entered into a contract with a planter. (See Walter Wilson, *Forced Labor in the United States*, Chaps. VI and VII.) The social oppression and degradation of the masses corresponding to such forms of economic bondage can well be imagined.

The share-tenant is distinguished from the sharecropper principally in the fact that he owns part of the means of production and makes an investment in the undertaking. He furnishes his own work stock and feeds it, and also supplies his own implements and seed. Rent is paid in kind, either one-fourth or one-third of the crop, and fertilizer expenses are shared in proportion to the ratio of each party's share of the crop. The share-tenant must also submit to supervision by the landowner or his agent. Since he must take advances from the landowner, or the supply merchant directly, the share-tenant is also caught in the credit net and is accordingly subject to a high degree of supervision, including the marketing of the crop.

There is a real distinction here in the status of the tiller of the soil, although his actual condition of semi-servitude is but little removed from that of the sharecropper. The share-tenant has a greater degree of independence in that he is to some extent his own capitalist, owns part of the means of production and makes part of the investment in the undertaking. This form of tenancy is sometimes combined with cash renting, when the share-tenant may pay cash rent for land on which he grows corn or some other food crop.

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The renter most closely approaches tenancy as it prevails in highly developed capitalist areas. The standing renter pays his rent for the land with a fixed amount of the product, he pays rent in kind, and furnishes his own equipment and costs of production. In cash renting, the highest form of tenancy, the tenant pays a definite sum per acre or per farm as rent. Where such a renter is a small farmer, his work is often also closely supervised by the planter, who is interested in the crop for the rent as well as in many cases for advances of food and other necessities.

It is clear, therefore, that only the various categories of the share-, standing and cash tenants may properly be considered as tenants, although in their relations with the landlord there are strong semi-feudal elements, such as close supervision by the landowner and rent in kind, as well as the peculiar features of the Southern credit system. Of these, the share-tenant is the most harassed by the slave survivals and is often but slightly distinguished from the sharecropper. Capitalist tenants, in the sense of employment of wage labor, are to be found almost exclusively among the classes of standing and cash renters, among whom there also occur large-scale capitalist farmers, as well as small or poor farmers.

It must not be imagined that there is a strict line of demarcation setting off the tenant classes, on the one side, in the sphere where only semi-feudal relations of production exist, and, on the other, where only capitalist relations of production exist. The economic slave survivals make themselves felt in all phases of Southern economy, not only in agriculture but also in the forms of labor exploitation sometimes taken over by industry. And capitalist relations of production have also penetrated into the plantation system, so that on any single plantation one may find side by side wage-labor, sharecropping, share-tenancy and renting. In close proximity, one will find as well even a small-scale self-sufficing economy, the capitalist tenant, the small capitalist landowner, the plantation junker, and the large capitalist undertaking.

Share-tenancy is on the borderline between sharecropping and higher forms of tenancy, and is really a transition between the two. In reality, share-tenancy corresponds to the *metarie* system in Europe, which served as a form of transition from the original forms of rent (labor rent, where rent is paid by the direct labor of the tiller of the soil on the land of the overlord; rent in kind; and money rent as a transformation of rent in kind) to capitalist rent. Although in the South of the United States share-tenancy had as its predecessor the slave system and bears its imprint, in form it does not differ from the *metarie system*. In his discussion of the "Genesis

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of Capitalist Ground Rent" in Volume III of *Capital*, Marx describes the *metarie* system as follows:

> ". . . the manager (tenant) furnishes not only labor (his own or that of others), but also a portion of the first capital, and the landlord furnishes, aside from the land, another portion of the first capital (for instance cattle), and the product is divided between the tenant and the landlord according to definite shares, which differ in various countries. In this case, the tenant lacks the capital required for a thorough capitalist operation of agriculture. On the other hand, the share thus appropriated by the landlord has not the pure form of rent. . . . On the one hand, the tenant, whether he employ his own labor or another's, is supposed to have a claim upon a portion of the product, not in his capacity as a laborer, but as a possessor of a part of the instruments of labor, as his own capitalist. On the other hand, the landlord claims his share not exclusively in his capacity as the owner of the land, but also as a lender of capital." (Kerr edition, p. 933.)

This describes the situation of the Southern share-tenant, who in addition to his labor also provides a portion of the first capital in the form of implements, work stock, seed, etc. The landlord has additional claim upon the product not only in that he has lent the land to the share-tenant but also other capital, in the form of food and other advances. But the above does not yet describe the situation of the *sharecropper*, who provides no portion of the capital and can have no claim upon a portion of the product even in a restricted capacity as capitalist. Is the sharecropper, then, a free worker, free in the capitalist sense, *i.e.*, he himself is no longer a direct part of the means of production as a slave and the means of production do not belong to him?

Under the slave economy, says Marx, or,

> ". . . that management of estates, under which the landlords carry on agriculture for their own account, own all the instruments of production and exploit the labor of free or unfree servants, who are paid in kind or in money, the entire surplus labor of the workers, which is here represented by the surplus product, is extracted from them directly by the owner of all the instruments of production, to which the land and, under the original form of slavery, the producers themselves belong." (*Capital*, Vol. III, p. 934.)

Is the sharecropper that "unfree labor" on the "estates" in this characterization? He is; he is paid in kind and sometimes partly in cash, in the form of food and shelter, the amount of cash received in part determining the extent to which he is free. Not only in effect but also in form the entire surplus labor represented

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by the surplus product is extracted from the cropper *directly by the landlord*. The slave received a bare subsistence, the entire product he produced on the land was appropriated by the land-owner. In the case of the sharecropper, one-half of the crop is claimed by the landlord from the beginning by virtue of his monopoly of the land and implements, thus assuring from the start a goodly portion of the surplus product produced by the tiller of the soil. But the landlord manages to extract directly the full surplus labor, additional unpaid labor, beyond that portion assured him from the start. The bare subsistence of the cropper and his family is provided in the form of food and shelter, which are taken out of the remaining half of the crop and which generally represent the *total wages* received by the cropper. The cultivation of cotton as the principal commercial crop of the plantations causes these wages in kind to be paid not in the product raised, with the exception of corn, but in meagre food supplies measured in terms of cotton raised by the tiller of the soil. In the case of free wage-labor, the surplus labor is extracted from the worker under cover of a contract and is hidden in the regular money-wage paid, which makes it seem as though the laborer were being paid for the entire duration of his labor for the employer. In the case of the sharecropper the method of extracting the surplus labor is more direct, with remuneration for the labor necessary to keep the worker alive not hidden in the money-wage, but paid directly in the necessary subsistence. Although the sharecropper no longer appears as a part of the means of production, as did the slave, the method or form under which the surplus labor is extracted by the landowner differs but very little from that of chattel slavery.

The existence of sharecropping in a highly developed capitalist society makes it possible for the cropper to appear occasionally in the capacity of a wage-worker, hiring himself out for money-wages at such times when his labor is not essential on his patch of the plantation. But this occasional appearance of the cropper as a wage-worker does not alter his basic characteristic as a semi-slave. He differs from the slave in that he is no longer a part of the means of production owned by the planter, and may occasionally appear as a free wage-laborer, but, like the slave, his entire surplus labor, as represented by the product of his toil, is appropriated directly by the land-owner.

In his theoretical title to half the crop (a title which is not legally recognized in a number of Southern States), in the entirely abstract promise of half the product of the cropper's labor, share-cropping contains elements of transition to capitalist tenancy. But this subdued promise, as well as the transition to free wage-labor, is

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restricted by the fact that the sharecropper is not entirely "free" from the means of production, in this case, the land. He does not have permanent tenure of the soil, nor is he bound to the soil either by forced possession of it, as was the case of the serf (for land was not a commodity which could freely be bought and sold), or by chattel bonds to the land-owner, as was the case with the slave. He is bound to the soil by direct coercive measures—by contract enforced by the State for the period of the growing year, and beyond that by peonage, by debt slavery which is made all the more coercive by the credit system under the domination of finance capital. The fact that he is not owned by the landlord or capitalist tenant, allows him that degree of freedom which permits changing masters under certain circumstances. The existence of sharecropping in a capitalist environment also admits a greater degree of freedom in the presence of capitalist relations of production in there being at hand an avenue of escape from the semi-feudal relations between master and servant. It is precisely in this element of bondage to the soil, of direct coercive measures to enforce it, that the share-tenant and to a lesser degree other tenants in the South, despite their restricted capacity as capitalists, share with the cropper in suffering from the survivals of the slave system.

The price which the land-owner paid for a slave was "the anticipated and capitalized surplus value or profit . . . to be ground out of him".* For the land-owner the money paid for the slave represented a deduction from the capital available for actual production, and this deduction from capital had ceased to exist for the land-owner until he sold his slave once more. An additional investment of other capital in production by means of the slave was necessary before he began to exploit him. Under sharecropping, the land-owner is saved his initial deduction from capital in the purchase of the slave; he invests only in his advances to the cropper and in the costs of production. It costs about $15 a year under chattel slavery to feed and maintain a slave. In the sharecropping system in normal years the average advance for each cropper *family* was about $15-20 a month during the seven months of the growing season (Brannen, *op cit.*, p. 62). In 1933, the average annual furnishings supplied by landlords to croppers amounted to from $50 to $60. (A. T. Cutler and Web Powell, "Tightening the Cotton Belt," *Harper's*, February, 1934.) Now, this advance is supplied to a cropper family, which usually has more than five and more often close to ten members, some of whom may earn a little on the side as wage-workers on the landlord farm or in a nearby town. But the actual running invest-

* Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 940.

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ment in supplying the subsistence of life to the worker is hardly any higher, and sometimes even lower, than under slavery, and if one considers the initial deduction in capital in the purchase of the slave, even much less. In addition, the land-owner is relieved of the necessity of maintaining his labor over dull periods as, for instance, during the months intervening between the chopping and picking of cotton and between the harvest and the planting of the next crop, or during periods of crises. Under terms of the contract, verbal or written, protected by the State power, the landlord may force the croppers to remain on the plantation without at the same time advancing food and other supplies, a state of affairs which becomes common throughout the cotton belt during periods of crises or of low prices for cotton. Under the Roosevelt acreage reduction program, which in 1934 provided for a reduction in cotton acreage of about 40 per cent, large numbers of croppers and other tenants are simply being released from their bondage to the soil, with no hopes of employment elsewhere.

Sharecropping and share-tenancy can only be dominant in a specific social content. Their prevalence is inconceivable where a highly developed form of capitalist agriculture prevails. Of the various forms of tenancy in the South, only cash renting can be likened to the dominant form of tenancy of the North.

Tenancy in the North is the culmination of an altogether different process than in the South. Northern agriculture is undiluted by feudal remnants. Here tenancy is, in general, the result of the impoverishment of the small and middle independent landowners by finance capital through mortgages and other forms of usury, monopoly prices in manufactured products, State taxes, control of marketing of farm produce, exorbitant freight charges, etc. Here tenancy has developed on the basis of the capitalist relations of production; in the South it has grown out of the slave system. To a large extent the impoverished and expropriated farmers of the North vanished into the stream of population that was flowing from country to city. In the decade 1890-1900 the net migration from rural to urban communities was estimated at 2,500,000; in 1910-1920 it had reached 5,000,000. Many of these included the children of farming families and farm workers who were displaced by increased agricultural production per worker made possible by the extensive use of farm machinery and improved methods of cultivation. But this flow of population also concealed the cry of expropriated farmers. The wide expanse of the public domain which did not become fully settled until the end of the 19th century and the flow of immigration from abroad had made possible the existence of extensive independent land-

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ownership precisely during the period of the most extensive development of large-scale industry. American industry was absorbing the expropriated peasantry of Europe with the result that the extensive expropriation of the farmers in the United States became unnecessary for the creation of a large labor reserve for industry. In addition, large-scale capitalist production in agriculture could develop upon the basis of the seizure of large parcels of the public domain by the capitalists, and the early and intensive use of farm machinery. But as the public domain became exhausted, as monopoly capitalism developed, expropriation began in earnest as reflected in the large migration of the farm population to the cities in 1890-1900. The cutting off of the labor supply from abroad by the World War at a time when increasing demands were being made of industry hastened this expropriation as can be seen in the huge figure for the city-ward migration in 1910-1920, although a large portion of this migration came from the South.

To a certain extent the expropriation of the farmers was also reflected in the rapid increase of tenancy in the North. We say to a certain extent because an increase of tenancy does not necessarily mean a corresponding expropriation of the farm population. Many of the tenants in the North are in fact middle or well-to-do farmers, and some of them even large-scale capitalists. It is possible for a land-owning farmer to become a tenant without shifting from his class as a small, middle or well-to-do farmer. The rapid increase in tenancy in the North since 1900 is, however, indicative of impoverishment, since foreclosures and other forms of expropriation not only deprived the farmer of his land and buildings, but also of his other capital, so that it was only as a much poorer capitalist that he could rent land, if at all, and continue as a farmer to be subject again to the same inexorable thirst of finance capital. Complete expropriation, not only of land and building, but also of machinery, livestock and other capital, as is more common during the present crisis, is reflected not primarily in the growth of tenancy, but in the decrease of the number of farmers, who have been so completely expropriated that they cannot even become small tenant farmers.

In the South, however, tenancy is not as a rule the result of the partial expropriation or impoverishment of the land-owning farmer, but has as its general basis the existence of the large landed estates perpetuated after the abolition of chattel slavery, the monopoly of the land by the owners of estates and plantations. It is the result of the non-completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and not, as in the North, the result of impoverishment of the farming population brought about by finance capital on the basis of capitalist

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relations of production in agriculture. Of course, this form of expropriation also takes place in the South, but it is not the chief basis for the existence of tenancy.

This leads to another difference of basic importance between the forms of tenancy in the North and in the South. Marx points out in his third volume of *Capital* that the progressive features of the capitalist mode of production in agriculture consist, on the one hand, in the rationalization of agriculture, which makes it capable of operating on a social scale and, on the other hand, in the development of capitalist tenants. While the latter has an adverse effect upon the former in the sense that tenants on the land hesitate to invest capital on improvements and often permit the land to deteriorate, the development of capitalist tenancy performs a two-fold progressive function. With regard to pre-capitalist forms of agriculture, it separates land-ownership from the relations between master and servant; the land-owner himself or his manager is no longer the direct overlord of the tillers of the soil, as was the case on the feudal domain or under slavery. With regard to *post*-capitalist development, capitalist tenancy "separates land as an instrument of production from property in land and land-owners, for whom it represents merely a certain tribute of money, which he collects by force of his monopoly from the industrial capitalist, the capitalist farmer". Land thus more and more assumes the character of an instrument of production and as such is separated from private property in land which merely signifies a monopoly over a parcel of land which enables its owner to appropriate a portion of the surplus value produced by the workers on this land in the form of rent. This is "*reductio ad absurdum* of private property in land", declares Marx, and he points out that the capitalist mode of production "like all its other historical advances" brought about this as well as rationalizing of agriculture "by first completely pauperizing the direct producers". (*Capital*, Vol. III, pp. 723-724.) Capitalist tenancy, therefore, in making the land-owner merely a rent collector, an appropriator of surplus labor, and in stripping the actual farmer of land-ownership, paves the way for the abolition of all private property in land and, once the land-owner is stripped even of his capacity as rent collector, for the Socialist operation of agriculture.

This progressive feature of capitalist tenancy is present only in a restricted sense in the South. Tenancy in the South, because of the foundation upon which it developed and exists today, does not exhibit the progressive features of capitalist tenancy. As regards the past, tenancy did not succeed in separating on a general scale land-ownership from the relations between master and servant; in fact, *it pro-*

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longed and *strengthened* these relations, it perpetuated in a highly developed capitalist country powerful remnants of chattel slavery. Nor, as far as the dominant forms of tenancy are concerned, was its corollary developed, the separation of land as an instrument of production from private property in land. The Southern landlord who rents his land out to share-tenants or even renters, maintains direct supervision over production, despite the intervention of rent in kind which, in this case, does not serve to draw a sharp line of distinction between the relations of production and land-ownership. To the small degree that absentee landlords have rented out their land to large plantation operators, or in small lots to independent cash renters, can capitalist tenancy be considered as existent in the South.

Without possessing any of the progressive features of capitalist tenancy, the tenant system in the South partakes of its chief evils. Tenancy is one of the greatest obstacles to the rational development of agriculture because the tenant will not invest in improvements on the land, which would only add to the capital of the land-owner. A special study revealed that out of some 55,000 rented farms in the United States for which data was collected, 36 per cent reported decreasing fertility of the soil. But in 50 counties of the South, 56 per cent of the rented farms were reported as decreasing in fertility. The greater the number of tenants under a single landlord, the greater the loss in soil fertility; 63 per cent of the landlords in the 50 Southern counties who have five or more tenants, a unit which in most cases may be classed as a plantation, reported decreasing soil fertility. (Turner, *The Ownership of Tenant Farms in the United States*, p. 41.) The retarding influence of tenancy on the technical development of agriculture is further accentuated in the South by the cultivation, year in and year out, of cotton as the commercial crop, which has the effect of deteriorating the soil and demands advanced methods of preservation if the land is not ultimately to become useless. Many of the tenants, especially on the non-plantation and small plantation farms, own only the most wretched stock and implements and are in no position to give the soil the attention it needs. The credit system, with its insistence upon cotton as the principal crop, does not permit the farm operator, if he desires credit, to rotate crops and is thus a powerful factor in bringing about the utter desolation of the soil in large stretches of the older cotton belt.

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The Rise of the Revolutionary Movement in Cuba

By JOAQUIN ORDOQUI

THE economic situation of Cuba has not been strengthened in spite of all the help given by Yankee imperialism to the Mendieta government. This help to the ruling classes has as its aim the consolidation of a counter-revolutionary government to serve its interests and, under its direct leadership, to attempt to carry on bloody struggles against the masses in order to impede the rising revolution in Cuba.

We can analyze the means employed for this support as follows: A loan of $4,000,000 converted into 10,000,000 silver pesos through a process of inflation favored by imperialism, made without the consequent depreciation; the reduction of the high tariff on sugar (this industry is controlled, for the most part, by Yankee companies), increase of the quota for sugar, etc.

The help given by Yankee imperialism to the ruling classes of the country has aimed at consolidating the positions of this imperialism in Cuba, and the introduction of the Reciprocity Treaty. This treaty, besides favoring the interests of Wall Street, reflects at the same time the acuteness of the inter-imperialist struggle for complete control of the Cuban market and the ousting of Japan, Great Britain, Spain and other countries which export goods to Cuba. The proof of this is the fact that some articles from the U.S., as "most favored nation," enjoy a tariff reduction of from 20 to 40 per cent over other countries. Another effect is that the development of light industry, which has commenced to spring up in Cuba, will be impeded, as also the growing of various foodstuffs, such as rice, potatoes, beans, etc., which are now almost enough to satisfy the national consumption. The press in the service of the ruling classes is attempting to make it appear that the Reciprocity Treaty will solve the chaotic economic situation which is ravaging the country, through the "benefits" which Cuba will obtain from the new Reciprocity Treaty. In 1924, Cuba was one of the most important markets for the U.S. After the tariff of 1927, which favored the introduction of foreign capital and the development of some light industry in Cuba—textiles, shoes, lard, macaroni, etc. —and after the deep economic depression which followed, the im-

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portation of foodstuffs from the U.S. dropped from $57,482,000 in 1924 to $5,380,000 in 1933.

All these artificial methods used by Yankee imperialism and the bourgeois-landlord governmentof Mendieta-Caffery-Batista will not solve the economic crisis which grips Cuba; they will deepen the contradictions within the bourgeois-landlord camp. On the contrary, the crisis in the country is continually growing more acute. The revolutionization of the masses is increasing. Their revolutionary struggles are on an increasingly higher plane against the offensive of imperialism, which attempts to place on the shoulders of the workers, peasants and all strata of the toiling masses, the main burden of the crisis.

As Comrade Sinani says (in *The Communist International*):

> "The Cuban revolution has as its immediate perspective not a peaceful period, symbolized by the Constituent Assembly, called for December, but the action of the masses and the increase of class battles, led more and more by the Communist Party of Cuba, which is organizing the masses for the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution, under the slogan of Workers' and Peasants' Soviets."

The revolutionary struggles of the masses, which are developing throughout the whole country, clearly show the correctness of the analysis of Comrade Sinani. In spite of the bloody terror used by the government and the ruling classes, the proletariat and all strata of the toiling masses are struggling in the most energetic and determined manner against the terror, for the maintenance of the demands they have already won, for the winning of new demands, and also for democratic rights.

Comrade Manuilsky, at the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., emphasized the fact that the different types of reaction known to history can in essence be reduced to two forms. Reaction which comes on the descending revolutionary wave, after the defeat of the revolution and the crushing of the proletariat, and reaction which is directed against a rising revolutionary movement. The latter, instead of discouraging the masses, on the contrary, increases their revolutionary spirit and causes them to struggle even more vigorously, raises these struggles to a higher level; this is exactly what is happening in Cuba today. The toiling masses of Cuba are not allowing themselves to be intimidated by the brutal and bloody terror unleashed by the Mendieta-Batista-Caffery government. The masses, under the leadership of the C.P. of Cuba and the C.N.O.C., are answering the methods used by the forces of counter-revolution with powerful mass struggles.

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A few weeks ago, while being transported to the dungeons of Principe Fortress by Lieutenant Powel of the constitutional army, Comrades Ivo Fernandez and Rodriguez were brutally murdered, and the student Balmaceda was seriously wounded. This brutal murder, carried out at the orders of the government and the ruling classes, has been the cause of a great strike wave which has embraced large sections of the working class, the students, as well as the government employees of five departments; a movement which drew the broadest toiling masses in the country into demonstrations, protest meetings, struggles against terror and against the barbarous assassination of these militant revolutionists. There was a strong movement for the formation of popular tribunals for judging and punishing Lieutenant Powel and his accomplices. This powerful mass movement forced the government to arrest Lieutenant Powel, in an attempt to stop the indignation of the masses.

The poor peasants, under the leadership of the proletariat, are defending their lands with arms in hand. Great revolutionary struggles of the peasant masses are developing, as in Realengo 18, Banaguices, and other places. Of these struggles the most important is that of the peasants of Realengo 18, a bloody fight against the attempted expropriation of their land by the Royal Bank of Canada, which is trying to seize it through the armed forces of the government. The peasants of Realengo 18 responded to this brutal offensive with struggle and with the organization of an armed militia of 1,500 men, at the same time sending out a call to the workers of Cuba, asking their support and solidarity. The armed forces sent into the district were obliged to withdraw, in the face of the heroic resistance and militancy of the peasant masses, who were ready to fight.

The government, however, is organizing a greater offensive and is concentrating the armed forces of the counter-revolution against the struggling peasants of this region. Heavy artillery is being concentrated in the vicinity of Realengo 18. The government is attempting to carry out these methods of attack with the greatest caution because of the great mobilization of the forces of the proletariat, under the leadership of the C.P. and the C.N.O.C., for the heroic struggle of the peasants of Realengo 18, a struggle which is spreading throughout the region of Guantanamo, where Yankee imperialism has its naval base. The solidarity and support of the Cuban proletariat for the struggling peasant masses are increasing every day. A good example was given by the railway workers of the Guantanamo railway, who refused to transport troops, as well as large quantities of arms and munitions, sent by

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the government to this region, where the peasants were carrying on the struggle. The C.N.O.C. and many trade unions have issued calls and manifestos to the toiling masses for the fullest mobilization of the proletariat in support and defense of these struggles, for their extension, as well as for other peasant movements which are taking place throughout the country, movements against expropriation, etc. In this way the C.P. of Cuba is carrying forward the struggle for the revolutionary alliance of the peasant masses with the proletariat, securing the hegemony of the latter in the struggle for the carrying through of the agrarian anti-imperialist revolution.

In the region of Florida more than 15,000 sugar workers are on strike for their economic demands, for an increase in wages, etc. In the centrals of Gomez Mena and Mercedita (near Havana) the workers are fighting for $1.25 a day, for an eight-hour day, as well as for other demands. The Secretary of Labor is trying, through all sorts of maneuvers and methods, to settle the strikes through the Arbitration Commission, while the workers are replying by struggle, demonstrating against any arbitration, following the line of class struggle of the C.N.O.C.

In Nuevitas the masses commemorated the death of the student Rafael Trejo (assassinated during the regime of Machado) by large demonstrations. The government unleashed its forces of repression in this town. Nevertheless, the masses are struggling and protesting against the outrages perpetrated by the government, which resulted in one being killed and several wounded. This was followed at once by strikes and protests of the toiling masses in this region.

The port workers of Havana are continuing the struggle against the strike-breakers who broke the recent strike movement, in spite of the maneuvers of the government and the reformist leaders, who wish to "settle" it through the "Intelligence Law". Some time ago, during the preparation of the general strike, the Workers Federation of Bahia, Havana, was attacked, and the general secretary of the organization, Comrade Porto, was arrested, together with other militant workers. The indignant workers immediately started to protest against the arrest of their comrades, carrying their anger to such a point that in the struggle the reformist leader Padron (recent Cuban representative in the Labor Office in Geneva) was killed. He was the man who betrayed the arrested workers to the police, and was the best agent of the government and the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the proletariat of Bahia, who attempted to destroy and obstruct the powerful strike of the port workers in solidarity with the struggle of the tobacco workers.

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The strike of the workers of the Cuban Telephone Co. is continuing for the reinstatement of the 246 strikers, a strike which has received support from all sectors of the proletariat. The reformist leaders of the Public Service, under pressure of the masses, were forced to call a 15-minute strike in solidarity with the comrades of the Cuban Telephone Co., declaring that they would go as far as calling a 24-hour strike. In this way they attempt to maneuver, and to pose before the masses as real defenders of the interests of the strikers. The C.N.O.C. has called upon the leadership of this trade union to struggle jointly, to support the movement of the strikers of the Cuban Telephone Co., and the further demands which are being put forward as slogans for the general strike, as well as the demands of the workers in the Public Services.

The cigar workers also presented their demands, for a wage increase, etc., and declared that if these demands were not met they would launch a movement for a general strike of cigar workers. Faced with the great determination and militancy of the cigar workers, the owners were forced to grant the wage increase.

The revolutionary wave is also embracing large strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie, particularly the students. The lawyers are fighting against the so-called "extraordinary tribunals". The doctors are bringing their demands before the government. The small urban landlords are fighting for the revaluation of their property, etc.

In general, the proletariat and the toiling masses of Cuba are struggling with determination against the bloody government of Batista-Mendieta-Caffery. Against the terror unleashed by the emergency tribunals, etc., they are carrying on great struggles, demonstrations, strikes for immediate demands and for democratic rights, carying through powerful mass political strikes.

These struggles reach a higher level with the carrying out of the General Strike.

The C.P. of Cuba and the C.N.O.C. have been able to lead, in a correct manner the proletariat and the rural and urban toiling masses to higher struggles. At the same time the Party has developed an intense campaign for the realization of the united front from below with the rank and file of the Cuban Revolutionary Party (Autentico), P.A.N., and A.B.C., on a basic program of specific demands, for better conditions, democratic rights, the immediate punishment of Lieutenant Powel, etc. The Party has unmasked and fought against the sham of the proposed Constituent Assembly. It has exposed the policy of Grau San Martin and Guiteras (his "Left"), a policy of "retreat", that is to say, of

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support for the policy of the ruling classes. Guiteras calls upon the masses to trust that he, with his "revolution", will solve the situation. As the C.P. of Cuba has correctly stated, what Guiteras, with his "Left" demagogy, is preparing is a *coup d'etat*, in which a faction of certain elements of the army that are antagonistic to Batista will take part.

The A.B.C. is at present opposed to the Constituent Assembly, because it has seen in the daily life of the country the enormous hatred of the toiling population of Cuba for this organization. There is a deep hatred against the A.B.C., because of its submission to imperialism, its chauvinism and discrimination against the Negro masses, its responsibility for the lynching of Poveyer, the Negro student of Trinidad, and its fascist decree-laws against the working class.

A striking proof of this hatred, and of the desire of the masses to struggle against the A.B.C., was given by the broad toiling masses of the country, who, under the leadership of the C.P. and the C.N.O.C., fought against the National Concentration of the A.B.C. on June 17, organizing a one-hour general strike on the 16th, which culminated in the general strike on the urban and inter-urban busses the following day. Because of the intense struggle and the campaign against it carried on by the C.P. of Cuba, the A.B.C. is rapidly disintegrating.

During the rise of the revolutionary movement the general strike of October 1 was organized, in which more than 200,000 workers in the basic industries of the country participated: urban and highway transport, street cars, railroads of the Cuban Northern system, and the Guantanamo lines, nearly all the port workers of the country, a large part of the sugar workers, the majority of workers in the tobacco industry, the building trades, textile, clothing, shoe workers, etc.

This general strike, led by the C.P. and the C.N.O.C., in spite of the terror and the disruptive maneuvers of the reformists and the Trotzkyites, was of a higher political level than any strike carried out since the fall of Machado.

In the face of this tremendous mass pressure the Supreme Court of Cuba was compelled to declare that "the emergency tribunals are unconstitutional", a fact which signifies not merely a victory for the lawyers who brought up the question before the court, but a victory for the great mass struggle led by the C.P. and the C.N.O.C.

In the advance of the general strike, the enormous desire for struggle on the part of the masses forced the reformist leaders Traveria, Nieto and Co., in the leadership of the street car union, to join the strike movement after it had begun. These facts show that the C.P. of Cuba and the C.N.O.C. must strengthen and de-

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velop, with still greater intensity, the work of the trade union opposition in those organizations still in the hands of the reformists, winning those organizations for the class struggle.

All these movements of strikes and mass protests make clear the counter-revolutionary theories of the Trotzkyites, who claim "that every strike movement is doomed to inevitable failure", as well as the theories of such reformists as Lucas Pino and Co. who do everything possible to bring strikes before the Secretary of Labor and to place them in the hands of the Arbitration Commission.

One of the weaknesses of the Party and the C.N.O.C., in the process of this powerful general strike movement, was the inability to carry out mass action on a large scale, demonstrations, meetings, etc., in which the masses would win the right to the streets, the right of assembly. Another weakness was the poor mobilization of the unemployed in the struggle for their demands.

One of the tasks to which the C.P. and the C.N.O.C. must devote greater attention is the struggle for the demands of the unemployed, such as social insurance and immediate relief, as well as the formation of a network of unemployment councils, with concrete plans of demands and action for winning these demands. It will also be necessary to give this work the support of part of the workers engaged in production, both organized and unorganized. Because of the great unemployment, and as a consequence of the new Reciprocity Treaty, which will increase still further the enormous number of unemployed, this question becomes of the greatest importance. The struggle for the general demands of the masses must be led by pointing out to them at the same time that the Reciprocity Treaty will cause great misery through the permanent restriction of sugar production by means of a fixed quota.

The C.P. must take the measures necessary to present and discuss with the masses the platform of struggle of the Party as opposed to the Constituent Assembly, as well as the popularization of the Constitution of Soviet Cuba, which has been drawn up by the C.P. of Cuba, and which will be put into effect by a workers' and peasants' government. The Party must also draw great lessons from the enormous struggles which are developing in the process of the revolution, such as the lessons of the Soviets of Mabay, Senado, etc., in order that all the workers of Cuba may know these lessons, their teachings and conclusions, so that they may apply them in the continuous struggle which is approaching for the conquest of Soviet Power.

The campaign against the Reciprocity Treaty must be carried to every place of work, pointing out at the same time how the owners

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will try to lower the wages of the workers in order to "compete" with the market and with dumping by the United States, and showing them how to arrive at the realization of workers' control in these enterprises, accompanied by great mass movements which give an impetus for the organization of councils (Soviets) in those localities where the situation and the other factors determine such action.

The great struggles of the peasants of Realengo 18 place before the Party the necessity for the intensification of the struggles for the economic and political demands of the masses, against discrimination and national oppression, for putting forward the slogan of self-determination up to separation for the Black Belt, and fighting for this slogan. Where the struggles make it necessary, Joint Committees of Action should be formed in order to lead the struggles to higher levels, pressing forward toward the point of setting up Soviet Power, and also pointing out to the soldiers and sailors the heroic struggle which is developing in defense of the peasant masses, calling upon them to fraternize, for their own immediate demands.

The C.P. of Cuba, vanguard of the proletariat, has shown the toiling masses of the country that it is the only Party capable of organizing and directing their struggles, the powerful mass movements which make the ruling classes tremble, very strongly affecting the stability of the bourgeois-landlord system of Cuba. The C.P. is the real organizer of the struggles of the proletariat and the urban and rural masses for their immediate demands, against the fascist decree-laws, against the proclamation of the Law of Public Order, against mass arrests, against the expropriation of the land of the peasants, for the revolutionary seizure of the land.

The Party has been able to carry on a tenacious struggle against the democratic illusions regarding the Constituent Assembly, against all the bourgeois-landlord parties, which attempt to show that all the economic and political problems of the country can be solved within the bourgeois-landlord-imperialist framework.

The central task of the Party is to show the masses that during the 14 months of revolution, the victories won by the masses have been won by their revolutionary struggle, by their vigorous movements of desperate and unwavering struggle against the exploiters and the ruling classes, pointing out at the same time what must be the road to be able to maintain their conquests; the development of the struggle against the bourgeois-landlord government of Cuba, the carrying forward of these struggles for the only way out of the crisis, the revolutionary way out, the agrarian anti-imperialist revolution, for Soviet Power, which will confiscate with-

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out indemnification the imperialist enterprises, the estates of the land-owners, banks, railroads, etc., and put them in the hands of the workers and peasants, soldiers and sailors, under the hegemony of the proletariat, led by the Communist Party of Cuba.

"The Communists must mobilize the wide masses of workers and peasants in the capitalist countries on the basis of the demand for granting, unconditionally and without reservation, complete State independence and sovereignty to the colonial peoples. The fight against the bloody suppression of colonial risings, against armed intervention of the imperialists against the national revolutions, against the growth of the military aggressiveness of imperialism, with its new armed seizures of territory, demands from the international proletariat systematic, organized, and self-sacrificing struggle. . . .

"Striving for the immediate recall of the armed forces of imperialism from the oppressed countries, the Communist Parties must work unceasingly for the organization of mass action in order to prevent the transport of troops and munitions to the colonies."
(*Thesis adopted by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International on the revolutionary movement in the colonies.*)

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An Unpublished Document

By FRIEDRICH ENGELS

THE document which we reproduce below represents the plan for a speech delivered by Engels at the Conference of the First International, at London, September 21, 1871. *At this conference Marx and Engels took a decisive stand against the Bakuninists, who advocated the abstention of the proletariat from politics. In their speeches, Marx and Engels posed point-blank the question of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the role of the political Party of the working class.—The Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute.*

THE PLAN OF THE SPEECH

1. Lorenzo: the question of principle is settled.[1]

2. Abstention from politics is impossible. Newspaper politics is also politics; all newspapers of the partisans of abstention attack the government. The question is only how and to what extent to mix in politics. That depends on circumstances and not on prescriptions.

2*. Abstention from politics is senseless: to abstain because unworthy persons may be elected; from this it would follow that no money should be deposited in the bank lest the cashier abscond. From this it would follow that no newspapers should be published since the editor may prove to be venal no less than a deputy.

3*. Political freedom—principally freedom of association, assembly, and press—is our means of agitation; does it make no difference whether or not it is taken from us? Ought we not to resist if these means are infringed upon?

4*. They preach abstention from politics, because all the rest is, as it were, equivalent to recognition of the existing state of things. What exists exists, and concerns itself in no way with whether we recognize it or not. But if we avail ourselves of the

1. The Spanish Bakuninist Lorenzo declared at the conference that it was not competent to decide on the question of the political struggle of the proletariat because this was a "question of principle" subject to the deliberations of the Congress. Marx and Engels, in their speeches, and later also in the resolution of the conference, indicated that this "question of principle" was settled in the Statutes of the International, as well as in the resolutions of several congresses of the International.—*Ed.*

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means which the existing State offers us for struggle against it, is that recognition? [2]

3. The working class party, as a political party, *exists* and desires to act politically; to advocate to it abstention from politics means to break up the International. The plain observation of the situation, political oppression compels the workers to occupy themselves with politics for social ends. The advocates of abstention are pushing them into the embrace of bourgeois politicians. After the Commune, which placed the political action of the workers on the order of the day, abstention from politics is impossible.

4. We want the abolition of classes. The only means is the political power of the proletariat: can we abstain from politics? All the adherents of abstention from politics call themselves revolutionaries. Revolution is the supreme act of politics, and whoever strives for it must recognize also those means which prepare the revolution, which educate the workers for the revolution, and bend their efforts to the end that on the morrow (after the revolution) they shall not be duped again by the Favres[3] and the Piats[4]. The question is only what politics to conduct—a politics *exclusively proletarian,* and not one that is at the tail-end of the bourgeoisie.

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2. Points 2*, 3*, 4*, underscored, were written by Engels to the right of the fundamental points and represent an insertion into the original text.—*Ed.*

3. Jules Favre, French bourgeois republican, lawyer, minister after Sept. 4, 1870, Thiers' right hand man in the suppression of the Commune. —*Ed.*

4. Felix Piat, French petty-bourgeois radical.—*Ed.*

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Marxism and Anarchism

By EMILIAN YAROSLAVSKI

THE First International arose in the period of animation of the labor movement, after the years of calm which followed the defeat of the revolution of 1848. During this period of capitalism's development, which was closely bound up with the revolution in technique, in the mode of production, and in the means of transport, capitalism penetrated into the most backward countries of Europe. Capitalism ruined millions of small patrons and artisans, and intensified the contradictions between the pre-capitalist economic forms, which were in decadence, and the capitalist forms, which were in the ascendant. Millions of proletarians who were thrown by capitalism into the terrors of famine and poverty sought an escape in the organized revolutionary movement. It was at the same time the epoch of national movements and of the creation of national states. The wars of this period contributed indirectly to the development of the revolutionary movement. One must emphasize particularly the great influence of the American civil war of 1861-65. The events in America, as Marx said in the preface to the first volume of *Capital*, were the tocsin for the labor movement in Europe.

This labor movement did not find at the outset its true path. "Thirty years ago," Lenin wrote in 1905, "Marxism did not dominate even in Germany, where the prevailing conceptions were, one may say, transitory, mixed, eclectic, intermediate between petty-bourgeois socialism and proletarian socialism. In the Latin countries, in France, Spain, and Belgium, the theories which were most widely spread among the advanced workers were Proudhonism, Blanquism, and anarchism, which expressed the viewpoint of the petty bourgeois, and not that of the proletarian."

While Marx and Engels, in the First International, represented the organized *proletarian* labor movement, whose aim was the conquest of political power by the proletariat, in order to crush the exploiters, destroy the classes, and create the classless socialist society, Bakunin in the First International was the representative of the petty bourgeoisie which had been ruined by capitalism, and of the "proletariat in tatters".

Marx, the theoretical and practical guide of the First International, had a large revolutionary experience in the advanced European movement. The essence of his teachings was the theory of the dicta-

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torship of the proletariat. Marx was convinced, and history has confirmed him, that

> "Between capitalist and Communist society lies a period of revolutionary transformation from the one to the other. There corresponds also to this a political transition period during which the State can be nothing else than the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*" (*Critique of the Gotha Program.*)

In 1866 Bakunin constructed the scheme of his "occult International", in which he developed his anarchist system. The basis of this system is the negation of any State, the negation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of political struggle. It is with these conceptions that Bakunin entered the First International, and he became its pernicious influence by carrying on a schismatic policy against Marx and Engels, and fostering intrigues against them. This activity of Bakunin and the Bakuninists was one of the causes for the dissolution of the First International.

The anarchists took a hostile position toward Marx on the fundamental question of the State and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Their arch-revolutionary phraseology, their pilippics against the State, were able to deceive the proletarians who were backward from a political point of view, but above all they influenced the petty bourgeois who were maddened by the horrors of the revolution. The ideas of this social stratum have been expressed above all by such men as Max Stirner, Proudhon, Kropotkin, Jean Grave, Malatesta, and other chiefs of international anarchism. That is why they were enchanted by phrases about the complete death, about the "negation" of the State. That is why the mere idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat acted on them like a bugbear. It is characteristic, as Lenin emphasized in 1917, that Plekhanov and Kautsky completely omitted from their critiques of anarchism the most urgent question, which is politically the most important in the struggle against anarchism—the connections between the State and the revolution, the question of the State in general.

* * *

The negative attitude of the anarchists toward the dictatorship of the proletariat springs directly out of their negative attitude toward the State. The anarchists explained the necessity of abstention from participation in political life by their negative attitude toward every State. If every State is a noose for the workers, then what matter the form of the noose? The anarchists declared that the workers should not choose between serfdom and capitalism, between different forms of the State. The false conception of the

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role of classes in contemporary society led Bakunin to his conception of the "equalization of classes", which he opposed to the Communist formulation on the suppression of the classes.

The problem of the State had become particularly acute at the time of the Paris Commune. In his remarkable pamphlet, *The Bakuninists at Work,* Engels unmasked the inconsistency of the Bakuninist theories. He showed, on the basis of the examples in Spain, that every time that the Bakuninists had to meet a revolutionary situation "they were obliged to throw overboard their entire previous program". At the time of the Spanish revolution of 1873 they participated in the governing committees of the separate towns, contrary to their principles, and everywhere they exhibited utter impotence. "The Bakuninists in Spain," Engels concluded, "give us a classic example of how *not* to make the revolution."

From the false conceptions of the anarchists on the State, on political struggle, and on the dictatorship of the proletariat, arose their views on the Party. For the Marxists, the creation of an independent revolutionary party of the proletariat is the *first condition* which is indispensable for the victory of the proletarian revolution. The anarchists reject the formation of such a party organized according to the principles of democratic centralism.

For the Marxists, the essential condition for the victory of the proletariat is arming the working class with the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism. The anarchists asserted that the workers and the peasants had nothing to learn. According to the Bakuninists, the peasants are "*eternal rebels*", who do not need to learn anything; therefore one does not need to propagandize Communist ideas among them: it is sufficient to organize their revolt in the various localities. When, in the recent period, the Soviets arose as organs of insurrection, as germs of the revolutionary State power, the anarchists naturally adopted a scornful, distrustful, negative attitude toward these organizations. The birth of the Soviets, especially the advent of the Soviet State, dealt a mortal blow to the anarchist ideas.

When the Bolsheviks were accused of anarchism, Lenin several times pointed out that the anarchists reject the utilization of the State power by the revolutionary proletariat during the period of transition toward Communism, while we Marxists believe that *this utilization of the State power in the interests of crushing the exploiters and suppressing the classes is the indispensable condition for the victory of Communism.* That is why Marx and Lenin asserted that there is an abyss separating anarchism and socialism.

One of the sources of the false conceptions of the anarchists is that they mistake the effect for the cause. Thus the anarchists put the suppression of the right of inheritance into their program, as an

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essential demand, justifying this demand by the fact that property is based on inheritance. The Marxists had to explain to the anarchists that the right of inheritance is only the consequence of a social regime based on the division of classes, on the monopoly of the means of production which is concentrated in the hands of one class.

The anarchists demanded the *suppression of religion*, of cults, instead of conducting a systematic persevering struggle, a systematic anti-religious propaganda to exterminate the roots of religion. The anarchists proposed plans for struggle against war which were very "radical" on the surface. Twenty-five years ago, Gustave Hervé proposed, as an anarchist, that all the soldiers should desert on the day when war was declared. But when the World War broke out, not only did Hervé turn into a chauvinist, but the most prominent theoreticians of anarchism, such as Kropotkin, Grave, Kornelissen, changed into partisans of the imperialist war.

The present-day labor movement should treat anarchism as an enemy which breaks the organized revolutionary struggle while covering itself with anarchist phrases. The example of the anarchist movement in Spain is particularly suggestive. From the beginning of the revolution of 1931, the anarchists, along with the reformists, broke the strikes of the workers, and disorganized the mass movement of the workers and peasants. Their role as strike-breakers was especially fatal in the recent struggle of the Spanish working class against the clerical and fascist Lerroux-Gil Robles reaction.

Anarchism also tried to penetrate into the Bolshevik Party by taking advantage of its difficulties and using as a path the petty-bourgeois elements in the Party. Lenin characterized the hatred of the Mensheviks toward proletarian discipline as an anarchist trait, and he fought relentlessly against Trotzky's "lordly anarchism".

After the revolution of 1905, the Bolshevik Party had to fight against the anarchist tendencies of the ultra-leftists of the "Advance" group.

In 1916, Lenin fought against Comrade Bukharin's false ideas on the State. At that time Bukharin was sliding toward a semi-anarchist conception of the State. He recognized an opposition in principle toward the State, without making a distinction between the proletarian State and the capitalist State, and he defended the necessity of "breaking up" the State in general. In 1920-21, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party conducted an energetic struggle against the anarcho-syndicalist deviation of the Shliapnikov group, the "labor opposition" that was decisively condemned by the Tenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, in 1921.

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Certain comrades are often misled by the fact that on several occasions Bakunin declared that he believed in Marx's dialectical materialism. However, this was only a verbal and formal recognition.

Events show that Bakunin entered into the First International in order to dissolve it from within. All the further struggle of the working class shows that in this collision of two political systems, of two political conceptions, Marx was completely in the right. There is not a single point where Bakunin was not wrong. The Bolshevik Party developed and strengthened itself under the banner of Marxism. Marx's conception, which was developed by Lenin and Stalin, has become the theory and the tactics of the international proletariat. The greatest movement in our epoch, the epoch of proletarian revolution, is developing under the banner of Marxism-Leninism.

What has become of the theory of anarchism, and its practice? Complete decomposition. It suffices to mention the fact that in the period of the magnificent struggle of the masses of workers and peasants for Soviet power, for socialism, against the landlords and the capitalists, the kulak enemies of the revolution found a leader and an ideological organizer in the Ukraine in the person of the anarchist ataman Makhno, who died several months ago, and who cleverly linked the anarchist theory with Jewish pogroms and the massacre of Communists.

Historical experience shows all the harmfulness, all the theoretical and practical inconsistency of anarchism. The struggle against anarchist ideology, against all its manifestations, is an important task of the Communist Party. The Communists are victorious in the U.S.S.R., and tomorrow they will be victorious throughout the world, by fighting ceaselessly against all non-proletarian and anti-proletarian tendencies.

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Figures on the American Economic Crisis

AS OF OCTOBER, 1934

By JOHN IRVING *and* PHIL MAYER

(Labor Research Association)

THE traditional methods of measuring the economic status of a nation consist of comparing the index numbers of current production, consumption and exchange with some set base period or computed "normal". By no means can such comparisons be relied upon to measure fully the changing lot of the masses of worker-consumers. In a class society, in which the wealth and income are dammed up in a thin upper layer of the population, shifts in these indexes may occur which not only fail to reveal the changing fortunes of the mass of the population, but may even lead to erroneous conclusions with regard to their implications.

As one instance, we may cite the recent recurrent jubilation in the bourgeois press over the increase in the amount of savings deposits during the last year or so. They would have us believe that this reflects increases in the saving power of the mass of workers. What these figures reflect, however, is the fact that during a period of declining investment opportunities, the speculators in securities and in other types of investments, rather than let their funds lie idle, will place them in savings banks for the more certain, though usually

TABLE 1—PRODUCTION[1]

	1934			October			
THE FIELD	Oct.	Sept.	Aug.	1933	1932	1931	1929
General Index	70[2]	67	71	72	65	73	113
Steel ingot production	36	34	34	54	29	42	125
Pig iron production	32	31	35	45	23	42	131
Cotton consumption	92	59	82	90	92	81	117
Automobile production	52	53	62	50	18	26	122
Lumber production	47	50	56	53	39	53	141
Cement production	41	47	44	32	52	70	113

(1) The *Annalist* Index of Business Activity. "Normal", that is, the computed long-time trend, with the seasonal variations eliminated, equals 100 per cent. The indexes given here should be thought of as percentages of this "normal".
(2) Subject to revision.

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smaller, ir est return. This is what explains the "rise in savings banks depc ;" of the last year or two, and not the "nest eggs" or increased e nings of the "average" citizen.

Similar the apparent paradox of the increase in the amount of life insuran : in force in the face of the increasing inability of the vast masses of the population to buy the day-to-day necessities. In the best of times, life insurance is a luxury of the upper 15 to 20 per cent of the population. During the past year or two this has become increasingly so. What has gone into effecting the increase in the amount of life insurance in force in the last year or two has been the conversion of the funds hitherto employed in "playing the market" as well as in more solid investments, into paid up annuities. These annuities, paid up as well as deferred, have risen to as much as 25 per cent of the insurance written by many of the larger insurance companies. In fact, these large sums have been virtually forced upon the insurance companies. They have no place to invest them, no more than do the insurants themselves. Hence, the glut of the money market; hence the lowest interest rate in the history of

TABLE 2—EMPLOYMENT [1]

	1934			October			
THE FIELD	Oct.	Sept.	Aug.	1933	1932	1931	1929
A. *Mfg. Ind.* (1923-25=100)							
Gen. Index (90 Ind.)	79	76	80	80	64	74	108
Iron and steel	..	65	70	70	49	59	103
Elec. mach., appar. and supp.	..	66	65	61	48	74	136
Foundry & mach. shop prod.	..	67	69	43	27	62	112
Automobiles	..	81	93	64	42	58	97
Steam rail, repair shops	..	55	54	54	51	60	83
Cotton goods	..	52	89	101	74	73	96
Knit goods	..	101	103	114	103	100	120
Silk and rayon goods	..	58	68	79	79	88	105
Woolen and Worsted goods	..	..	68	91	70	62	84
Men's clothing	..	90	88	88	81	88	105
Women's clothing	..	121	110	119	117	130	154
Boots and shoes	..	86	92	88	86	85	103
Slaught. and meat pkg.	..	121	112	102	81	82	96
B. *Non-Mfg. Ind.* (1929=100)							
Anthracite mining	..	57	50	57	64	87	106
Bituminous mining	..	78	77	68	67	81	99
Telephone and telegraph	..	71	71	69	76	84	102
Power and light	..	86	86	82	80	93	106
Retail trade	..	88	82	90	81	90	102
Steam RR's (1923-25=100)	..	57[2]	58	57	57	68	97

(1) Compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, except steam railroads (non-mfg.), which is compiled by the Interstate Commerce Commission.
(2) Subject to revision.

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the country. Hence, in part, the furious efforts to induce the "capital goods" industries to borrow, the government leading as well as showing the way.

But the traditional methods of measuring the economic status of a nation fail also in that, at best, the indexes employed can but reflect things that have already happened: tons of steel ingots produced the month before; car loadings, employment, department store sales, etc., of the period already passed. There is no way of telling, from the indexes themselves, when they would make a turn, either up or down; whether they would continue to hold a lateral position.

But these are the "traditional" methods of measuring the current and, by inference, prospective business conditions. The current crisis, however, it would seem, has given rise to a new form of business analysis to which the bourgeois press has increasingly turned for enlightenment. This new business barometer is variously known as "business confidence", or "business sentiment", or "business morale".

Said the *New York Times* editorially (November 19, 1934):

> "By a consensus of opinion and resolution, it would seem that Americans have determined to make an end of the depression quickly

TABLE 3—PAYROLLS[1]

	1934			October			
THE FIELD	Oct.	Sept.	Aug.	1933	1932	1931	1929
A. *Mfg. Ind.* (1923-25=100)							
Gen. Index (90 Ind.)	61	58	62	59	45	61	112
Iron and steel	..	37	44	48	22	38	110
Elec. mach., appar. and supp.	..	48	50	42	29	57	145
Foundry & mach. shop prod.	..	47	50	43	27	46	119
Automobiles	..	54	77	46	25	44	96
Steam, rail. repair shops	..	45	48	49	38	54	93
Cotton goods	..	40	63	81	50	56	90
Knit goods	..	91	89	106	89	94	143
Silk and rayon goods	..	41	48	61	55	74	106
Woolen and worsted goods	..	..	48	67	48	49	84
Men's clothing	..	62	66	63	50	61	93
Women's clothing	..	85	85	91	80	108	158
Boots and shoes	..	68	79	70	63	61	109
Slaught. and meat pkg.	..	109	99	78	63	76	102
B. *Non-Mfg. Ind.* (1929=100)							
Anthracite mining	..	47	40	62	67	91	134
Bituminous mining	..	51	50	44	38	56	107
Telephone and telegraph	..	72	74	67	76	92	105
Power and light	..	79	80	76	74	93	106
Retail trade	..	71	67	72	67	85	103
Steam railroads[2]	..	..	133	127	125	172	264

(1) See footnote 1, Table 2, Employment.
(2) In million dollars.

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and entirely. . . . It is an extraordinary change to have come so suddenly over the spirit of the country's dream.

"Skeptics may raise many doubts and questions . . . why was it not done before? But now . . . people in all parts of the land feel that times are getting better, and that they will soon be much better. . . .

"It may be said that these recent demonstrations have already wrought one form of recovery. It is the recovery of morale. . . ."

But at the moment of this writing (November 27) the Commissioner of Public Welfare reports net additions to the relief rolls of New York City coming at the "low" rate of 15,000 a month, and Harry Hopkins, Federal Administrator of Relief, reiterates an earlier prediction of Coordinator Richberg's that by the beginning of 1935, three to four months hence, the government relief rolls will carry the record number of 5,000,000 families.

* * *

The index of production for October showed a "recovery" from

TABLE 4—PER CAPITA WEEKLY EARNINGS[1]

	1934		September		
THE FIELD	Sept.	Aug.	1933	1932	1931
A. *Mfg. Industries*					
Average (90 Ind.)	$18.54	$18.89	$18.67	$17.03	$20.83
Iron and steel	15.56	17.23	19.19	11.99	18.53
Elec. mach., appar. and supp.	20.31	21.16	20.61	19.36	24.70
Foundry and mach. shop prod.	19.50	20.16	18.45	15.40	20.22
Automobiles	18.86	23.06	21.60	14.14	20.22
Steam rail, repair shops	22.69	24.48	23.33	20.53	25.42
Cotton goods	12.53	11.46	13.11	10.96	12.97
Knit goods	15.43	14.61	15.24	13.84	15.38
Silk and rayon goods	13.16	15.93	14.40	13.31	17.54
Woolen and worsted goods	15.39	15.97	17.54	16.40	18.59
Men's clothing	16.51	17.51	17.11	15.07	17.89
Women's clothing	17.26	19.46	22.39	18.99	24.44
Boots and shoes	16.69	18.14	17.87	15.82	17.50
Slaught. and meat pkg.	22.73	22.34	19.65	20.93	24.91
B. *Non-Mfg. Industries*					
Anthracite mining	24.05	23.35	31.09	24.47	23.55
Bituminous mining	17.02	16.75	15.78	12.76	17.32
Telephone and telegraph	26.96	27.60	25.60	26.32	29.27
Power and light	29.26	29.64	28.18	28.91	31.08
Retail trade	19.85	20.17	19.56	20.10	23.25
Steam railroads[2]	——	120	120	117	136

(1) Compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
(2) Per capita monthly earnings, computed from figures of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

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September, that is, it went back to where it would have been in September had there been no textile strike then. Of the six major components of the *Annalist* index of business, three declined and three, including cotton consumption, rose. Cotton consumption rose from 59 per cent of normal in September to 92 per cent of normal in October. The composite index of 70 for October compares with the index of 71 of last August and with that of 72 of October, 1933.

Similarly, the index of employment rose in October compared with September. But the October index of 78.6 (average 1923-25=100) compares with that of 79.5 for August this year, and with that of 79.6 of October a year ago. This in spite of the fact that in the course of a year over 700,000 new employables are added to the working population of the country.

As regards the payrolls, the indexes were as follows:

October, 1934	60.7
September, 1934	57.9
August, 1934	62.1
October, 1933	59.4

It is important to record here the recent computation of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics bearing upon the decline in employment. These computations show that the index for the *non-durable goods* industries stands now (October, 1934) at 95.0 per cent of the 1923-25 average, while that of the *durable goods* industries stands at 63.3 per cent. Again, one must not forget that the percentages are compared with the figures of ten years ago as 100 per cent. The employable population has the meanwhile increased by seven million persons.

Per capita weekly earnings in September showed a decline from

---

TABLE 5—NUMBER AND EXTENT OF STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS[1]

THE FIELD	Number of Disputes	Number of Workers Involved	Number of Man-Days Lost
1934:			
September[2]	200	531,000	———
August[2]	224	130,196	2,101,887
July[2]	244	230,000	2,306,428
June	220	110,619	1,903,450
May	263	228,749	2,221,390
April	228	170,296	2,280,164
September:			
1933	322	298,480	3,873,662

(1) *Partial figures* compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
(2) Preliminary figures subject to revision.

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August this year as well as from September of a year ago. In part this reflects the decrease in the number of weekly hours worked; 26 hours per week having been reported as the average for the iron and steel industry.

The index of department store sales for October remained the same as for September, and was four points below that of August. Variety store sales remained unchanged. Mail order and store sales alone showed considerable increase, reflecting the increased sales in the rural territories of the country, into which, according to a Washington dispatch dated November 23, over $500,000,000 have been distributed by the A.A.A. in the course of a little over a year.

Of major importance also is the rather sharp increase in the commodity stocks index (Table 8). It was higher this September than for any of the preceding five years. This may account, among other things, for the continuing weakness in commodity prices.

The current rise in the securities market may mainly be explained by the flight of currency from the gold bloc countries of Europe, and in part by the growing conviction that "credit inflation" in this country is not far off. The deepening crisis in France and Belgium is for the moment the more effective factor. The one hundred and forty million dollars' worth of gold that have found refuge in the coffers of the American Treasury during the past month are, in addition to being a speculative stimulus, a source of new currency issues and of inflation.

TABLE 6—COMMODITY PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

	1934			October			
THE FIELD	Oct.	Sept.	Aug.	1933	1932	1931	1929
A. *Wholesale Prices*							
Combined Index (784)[1]	77	78	76	71	64	70	95
B. *Retail Prices*							
Food[1]	72	73	69	66	62	74	100
Dept. store articles[2]	87	88	88	87	73	86	—
C. *Cost of Living*[3]	78	74	77	75	73	82	97
D. *Agriculture*[4]							
Farm prices	100	103	96	78	56	68	140
Prices paid by farmers	126	126	125	116	105	119	152

(1) Wholesale prices (1926=100) and retail food prices (converted from 1913=100 to 1926=100) compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
(2) Fairchild's combined index (Dec. 1930=100).
(3) National Industrial Conference Board's combined cost of living index (converted from 1923=100 to 1926=100).
(4) U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics' indexes (Aug. 1909-July 1914=100).

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TABLE 7—CONSUMPTION[1]

THE FIELD	1934 Oct.	1934 Sept.	1934 Aug.	October 1933	October 1932	October 1931	October 1929
Dept. store sales[3]	75	75	79	70	71	86	112
Dept. store stocks[2]	—	64	64	70	62	80	101
Chain store sales[3]	—	97	93	84	82	—	—
Variety store sales[4]	90	90	90	86	80	91	110
Mail order and store sales (in million dollars)	64	53	44	54	45	52	79
Exports[2]	**—**	**48**	**49**	**42**	**33**	**44**	**114**
Imports[2]	—	43	39	46	32	51	119

(1) Compiled by the U. S. Department of Commerce, except chain stores (19 companies), which is the index of *Chain Store Age*. All indexes are based on dollar sales.
(2) 1923-25=100.
(3) Average same month 1929-31=100.
(4) 1929-32=100.

TABLE 8—DOMESTIC COMMODITY STOCKS ON HAND[1]

(1923-25=100)

THE FIELD	1934 Sept.	1934 Aug.	1934 July	September 1933	September 1932	September 1931	September 1929
All Stocks	154	144	140	153	143	142	139
A. *Mfd. Gds. (All)*	110	111	114	109	100	107	114
Chemical products	123	121	117	120	121	118	113
Food products	104	104	109	119	84	81	127
Iron and steel	93	96	96	100	91	123	135
Textiles	119	119	130	151	74	87	115
B. *Raw Materials (All)*	187	169	161	185	173	167	158
Foodstuffs	216	217	198	216	180	204	222
Metals	107	105	108	112	122	152	111
Textile materials	217	173	173	215	217	170	113

(1) Compiled by the U. S. Department of Commerce.

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